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NOTES AND QUERIES

Extra Number—No. 17

HISTORICAL MEMOIRS RELATING TO THE  
HOUSATONIC INDIANS (1693-1755).

*By Rev. Samuel Hopkins*



WILLIAM ABBATT

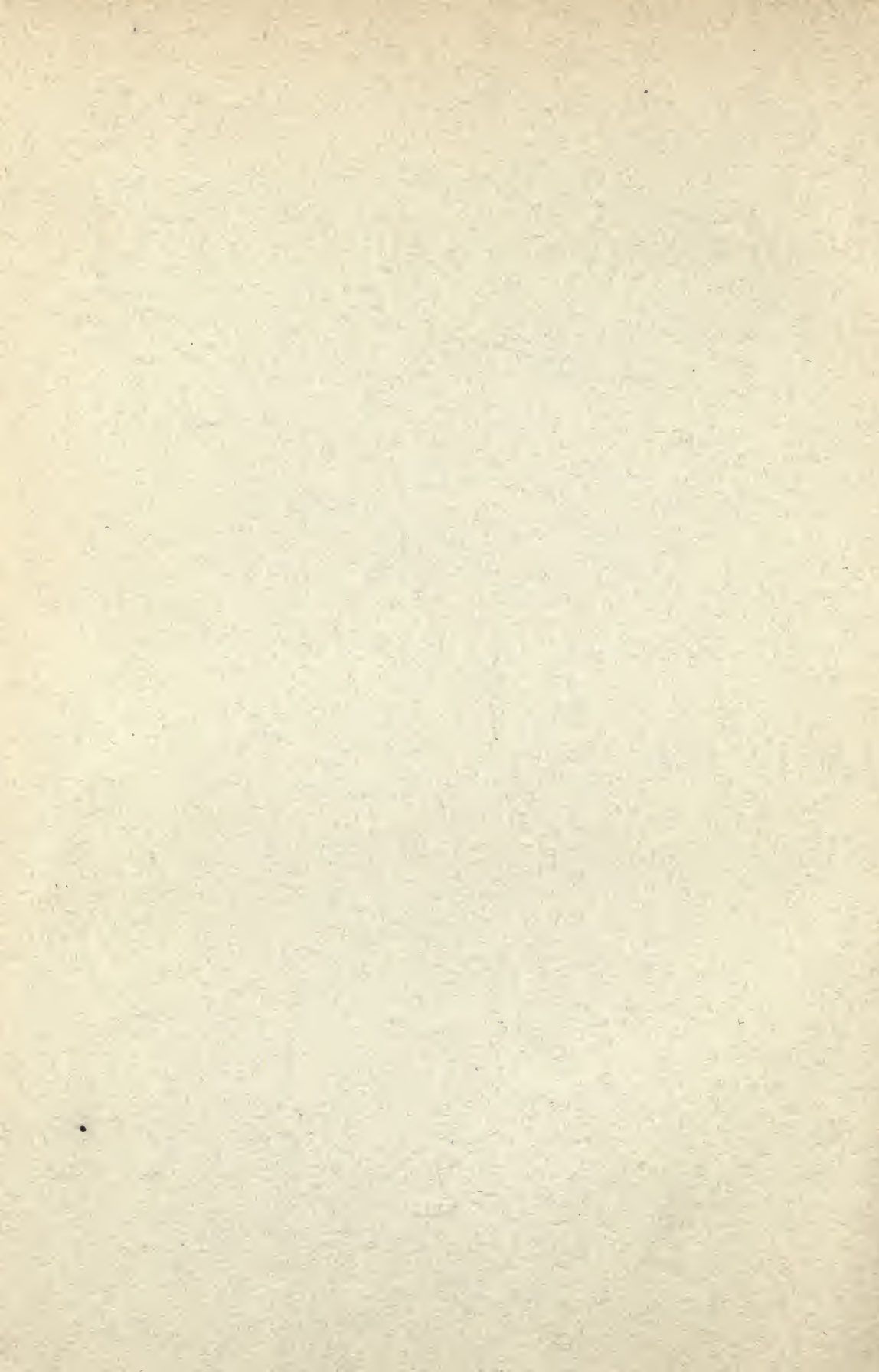
410 EAST 32D STREET,

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:

NEW YORK

1911













Rev<sup>d</sup> Sir,

I rec<sup>d</sup> of Capt Wells 17-14-  
that being, as he said, all the Skins were pired  
at. We have no remarkable news. Our Indians  
are this week gone out to make Sugar. Mr Wood-  
bridge & I design to go out to them next day after  
to morrow: & live with them, till they return if we  
can hold it out. Perhaps we shall be so taken with  
them & their way of living, that we shall take each  
of us a wife from amongst, & sadly disappoint all other  
fair ones, that may have any expectations from us.  
and indeed I am almost of opinion that this will be our  
wisest course; lest if we don't disappoint them they  
will us. I am Sir your very

P.S. I rec<sup>d</sup> per Mr Hubbard  
18 p<sup>ennies</sup> from you.

obliged humble

Servant

March. 1. 1736.

~~James~~  
J. Sergeant



HISTORICAL MEMOIRS  
RELATING TO THE  
HOUSATONIC INDIANS

BY  
REV. SAMUEL HOPKINS  
(1693—1755)

BOSTON  
S. KNEELAND, 1753

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WILLIAM ABBATT  
1911

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# HISTORICAL MEMOIRS,

Relating to the

*Housatunnuk Indians :*

O R,

An Account of the Methods used, and Pains taken, for the Propagation of the Gospel among that ~~Heathenish~~ *Tribe*, and the Success thereof, under the Ministry of the late Reverend Mr. JOHN SERGEANT:

T O G E T H E R,

With the *Character* of that eminently worthy *Missionary* ; and an Address to the People of this Country, representing the very great Importance of attaching the *Indians* to their Interest, not only by treating them justly and kindly, but by using proper Endeavours to settle *Christianity* among them.

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By SAMUEL HOPKINS, A. M.

Pastor of a Church in *Springfield*.

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*I perceive that God is no Respector of Persons : But in every Nation, he that seareth him, and worketh Righteousness, is accepted with him.*

Apostle PETER.

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B O S T O N : N. E.

Printed and Sold by S. KNEELAND, in Queen-Street, opposite to the Prison. 1753.





## EDITOR'S PREFACE.

We have much pleasure in offering to our subscribers this, the first reprint of one of the rarest items of Americana. Sabin enumerates only five copies as known to exist; and since then one of these has been destroyed by fire. The Brinley copy sold for \$39, the Balcom for \$78, and the Hollingsworth (1910) for \$155.

It is so scarce that Rich had never seen it, and refers for it to Allen's American Biographical Dictionary.

"One of the rarest of works relating to New England, as it is one of the most intrinsically valuable. It is unmentioned in Field's or Pilling's Indian Bibliographies." (*Sabin.*)

The author seems to have written but this one book; and while it lacks the interest possessed by some others of our series, because dealing with subjects or epochs nearer our own time, its inherent value, as a record of the self-denying, arduous and wonderfully successful labors of a consecrated man among the Indians of western Massachusetts, is great. During the Revolutionary War these Indians remained faithful to their Christian professions, and a number of them enlisted in the patriot army. Their then chief, Nimham (possibly the Captain Konkapot of the narrative), and a number of his men were killed in a skirmish with British cavalry near Kingsbridge, N. Y., as narrated in the *Magazine of American History* for June 1892. (Vol. 27, p. 404.)

We regret that of Mr. Hopkins himself we can give but little information. Dr. Sprague, in his *Annals of the American Pulpit*, says he was born in Waterbury, Conn., in 1693, was graduated at Yale College in 1720, and became pastor of the church in West Springfield the same year, and died there in 1755.

Mr. Sergeant's wife was Abigail Williams, daughter of Colonel Ephraim Williams of Stockbridge, and half-sister of Colonel Ephraim Williams, the founder of Williams College. After Mr. Sergeant's death she married (1752) General Joseph Dwight, by whom she had a son and daughter. The latter married Theodore Sedgwick, Judge of the Massachusetts Supreme Court. Mrs. Sergeant died February 15, 1791.



## PREFACE.

My design in writing this history is to give as clear and faithful an account as I am able, of the rise and progress of Christianity among the natives at Housatunnuk; particularly of Mr. SERGEANT'S Mission to them; of the measures he took to recover those Indians from their barbarity, ignorance and heathenism, and to inform them in the doctrines of the Gospel; and of the success which by the blessing of God attended his faithful endeavours to persuade them to embrace the true Religion.

In prosecuting this design I hope, in some measure, to do justice to the memory of that excellent man who, from generous and pious principles, undertook and with great industry and faithfulness prosecuted that self-denying work; to let the generous and pious donors to that good design know what the success of their liberal and charitable contributions to it has been; and to excite others to follow their laudable and generous example by giving freely of their substance to promote that good work, the conversion of the heathen to the Christian Faith. If these ends are answer'd, I shall not regret the trouble and pains I have been at.

It may perhaps be thought strange that this performance has been so long delayed. To which I would say, it was almost a year after Mr. SERGEANT'S death before I could satisfy myself that materials were to be found for such a purpose; and when I had collected what were to be had and entered upon it, I could proceed but very slowly, by reason of other business upon my hands and the many unavoidable avocations that attended me; and after I had finish'd it some unforeseen accidents and occurrences which I need not trouble the reader with, delay'd it for several months.

Why it is not more full and compleat, now it does appear, may

also be the subject of enquiry. 'To which I shall only say that it is in some measure owing to the want of those materials which I expected, and which might have been very helpful if they could have been obtain'd.

When it was first propos'd to me to undertake this business, I concluded that Mr. SERGEANT had preserv'd what was needful for such a work; for soon after he entered upon his Mission he wrote to me, desiring that I would send him an account of all transactions with these Indians, before he went to them—giving this as a reason why he desir'd it, viz: that he designed to collect and preserve materials for, and in time to come to give to the world a History of the Progress of Religion among the Indians—if his success among them should prove considerable—or to that purpose. I therefore concluded that he had not only kept a Journal of his own doings among them, but that he had also carefully preserv'd copies of all his letters to gentlemen with whom he maintain'd a correspondence, and their returns to him; and that little or nothing more would be needful than to transcribe, in their proper places, what he had preserv'd. But I found myself more or less disappointed upon all these heads. His Journal was indeed something large and particular for five or six years, but after that time it consisted only of a few brief hints, two or three pages in octavo upon common paper, containing the space of a year; and for two or three years it was wholly wanting. He was also so full of business that he had not time to preserve copies of those letters he wrote to gentlemen with whom he corresponded, either in this country or in Great Britain, except a very few. Yea, when he wrote an historical account of the success of the Gospel among the Indians at Stockbridge under his ministry, in compliance with the desire of the Committee of Directors for the Society for Propagating Christian Knowledge,<sup>1</sup> in Scotland, signified to him by their president, George Drummond, Esq., and sent it to them, he had

<sup>1</sup> This Society was organized in 1698.



no leisure to preserve a copy of it. Some few letters, likewise, written to him, were not to be found.

When I became acquainted with these things I was much discourag'd: and had I not recover'd the originals which Mr. SERGEANT wrote to the Rev. Dr. Colman,<sup>1</sup> to whom he wrote more frequently and more freely than to any other man, I should not have attempted anything of this nature. And when I entered upon the business I little thought of composing anything that would be fit for publick view. My design was (seeing I had by me what materials I could come at) to preserve what might be most likely to be of use hereafter, which in all probability would soon have been lost by continuing in loose papers.

And now it is propos'd to publish what I have written. I hope the foregoing account will excuse me, tho' the performance be not so full and compleat as it might have been by the help of those things which I could not obtain. Every reader will be sensible that Mr. SERGEANT, and the good cause in which he was engaged, might have been placed in a more advantageous light, had those things which are wanting been preserv'd. He will also, I trust, be as sensible that Eloquence and Neatness of Stile are not what I have laboured after, but a plain Narrative of Facts, in a language which I hope will prove intelligible to all who take the trouble of reading what is here presented.

I cannot think any judicious person, upon mature consideration, will judge that which has been brought to pass by Mr. SERGEANT's ministry among the Indians is small and inconsiderable. In the year 1734, when he went first to those Indians, their number, great and small, was short of fifty, and they in the depths of Heathenism and Barbarity. In the year 1749, when he died, they

<sup>1</sup> Benjamin (1673-1747), the distinguished pastor of the Brattle Street Church in Boston (1699-1747), who refused the presidency of Harvard. He was greatly interested in the Housatonic mission and other benevolent enterprises.

were increased to 218; 182 Indians had been baptized by him, and a church consisting of forty-two Indian communicants commemorated the sufferings of Christ at the Lord's Table. Mr. Woodbridge's school (separate from the boarding-school) had belonging to it fifty-five scholars, who were taught to read and write, and were instructed in the principles of religion. This indeed is not like a Nation being born at once; but by the use of ordinary means greater things have seldom been brought to pass in so short a time. And we, in this part of the country, have seen nothing like it respecting the poor natives who live upon our borders. And if Mr. SERGEANT's life had been spar'd to have prosecuted the affair of the boarding-school according to his intention, and with his wonted wisdom, prudence and skill, is it not highly probable that we should by this time have seen a considerable number of the Indian youth educated there, in Labour, Industry and good Husbandry, as well as in learning; who probably might have prov'd not only useful members of society, but also of the Church of Christ?

If what I have written upon this subject may be a cause of many thanksgivings to GOD for his rich grace and mercy, exercised to the Indians at Stockbridge by Mr. SERGEANT's Ministry; if it may be a means of exciting pious and well dispos'd persons to charitable and generous contributions to promote the spiritual good of the poor Natives there or in other places; if it may be an inducement to any young gentlemen qualified for such a service, to follow the excellent example Mr. SERGEANT has given; however mean the Performance is, the Effect will be good and will answer the end of the unworthy Author,

SAMUEL HOPKINS.

SPRINGFIELD,  
November 14, 1752.

## MEMOIR OF MR. SERGEANT

**J**OHN SERGEANT was born in Newark, N. J., 1710, and died in Stockbridge, Mass., July 27, 1749. He was graduated at Yale in 1729, and served as tutor there, 1731-5.

He began to preach to the Indians at Housatonic in 1734, and the next year permanently settled among them and taught them in their own language. In 1736, when the General Court purchased of the Indians all the land at Skatehook and in return granted them the township now called Stockbridge, he was made owner of one-sixtieth part, and ordained "settled minister to the Indians" there and at Kaunaumeeek. A short time before his death he established a manual labor school at Stockbridge, which was in successful operation for several years. He translated into the Indian language parts of the Old Testament and all of the New, except the Book of Revelation, and published a "Letter on the Indians" (1743) and "A Sermon" (1743).<sup>1</sup> His sons, Erastus, physician (1742-1814), and John (1747-1824), were worthy descendants of their noble father. The former was a skilful surgeon and a Revolutionary officer, while John succeeded his father as missionary to the Indians and acquired equal influence over them.

Nephews of the first John were the distinguished Pennsylvanian jurists, Jonathan Dickinson Sergeant (1746-1793), John Sergeant (1779-1852), and Thomas Sergeant (1782-1860).

<sup>1</sup> But for his untimely death Mr. Sergeant would have become as famous as John Eliot, the "Apostle to the Indians," and translator of the Bible. His labors were equally arduous, and as successful for the same length of time.

## HISTORICAL MEMOIRS, ETC.

**T**HE Tribe commonly known by the name of River Indians is large; most of them live within the limits of New York Government, interspersed among the Dutch, and never had endeavours us'd with them either to civilize or Christianize them, but still continue in their native Ignorance and Barbarity. A small number of them live in the N. W. corner of Connecticut Government, and a few families of them on Housatunnuk River or at Housatunnuk, which now goes by the name of Sheffield, in the county of Hampshire, in the S. W. corner of the Massachusetts Province, bordering on the Government of New York W[est] and on Connecticut Colony S[outh].

These few Indians at Housatunnuk are they to whom the Rev. Mr. John SERGEANT received his Mission, and with whom endeavours have been us'd for about eighteen years past to form them to Christianity. And 'tis the design of this Treatise to give an historical account of the measures which have been taken with them for this end, the success that has attended them, and what their present state is.

In prosecuting this Design I shall have occasion to give an account of a considerable part of the life, death and character of that pious and Excellent man, the Rev. Mr. JOHN SERGEANT, who preach'd the Gospel to them and died in that service.

About the year 1720, or perhaps something sooner, the General Assembly of this Province granted two townships on Housatunnuk River to some people who were desirous of settling there. The land was purchased of the River Indians, who had the native Right; but they reserv'd for themselves two small tracts of land:



one lying at a place they call Skatehook and [which] now falls into the first Parish in Sheffield; the other about 8 or 10 miles further up the river, which they call Wnahktukook, and is within the bounds of Stockbridge. And at each of these places dwell about four or five families of Indians.

When the English made settlements there they became acquainted with those Indians, and Kunkapot, the principal person among them, was soon taken notice of by the English, and spoken of as a man of worth. It was by a meer accident I became acquainted with his general character. A Mr. Ebenezer Miller, one of my neighbours, who had his account from Housatunnuk, inform'd me that he was strictly temperate, a very just and upright man in his dealings, a man of prudence and industrious in his business, and inclin'd to embrace the Christian religion; but that there were some difficulties lying in his mind—two of which I remember. One was, that if he became a Christian his own people would discard him; the other was, the ill conversation of Christians, it being as bad, as he tho't, if not worse, than that of the Heathen (an objection too just, and it is not to be wonder'd at that it should prove a stumbling-block to an observing Heathen).

I was much affected with the story of this Indian, and determin'd to endeavour that he, and the rest of the Indians there, might be instructed in the doctrines of Christianity. For this I was prepar'd, by Dr. Colman's giving me an account, the May preceding, of the money deposited in the Commissioners' hand for such purposes; and knowing that the honourable John Stoddard,<sup>1</sup> Esq., of Northampton, was, more than any man in the Province, acquainted with the state of the Indians in general, having often been employ'd by the Government in affairs relating to them, I determin'd to discourse with him upon it and to take his advice in

<sup>1</sup> John Stoddard (1681-1748) was a son of Rev. Solomon Stoddard and long Chief Justice of the Court of Common Pleas of Massachusetts.

the case. Accordingly, March 11th, 1734, I waited upon him at his own house, and confer'd with him upon the subject. He informed me that the River Indians were the largest tribe of any near the English settlements; that he judged a missionary among them would be much more likely to do service and to answer the end of his mission, than those missionaries, Messieurs Parker, Hinsdel and Secomb, who had been some time before ordained, and sent to the several forts and truck-houses<sup>1</sup> in our Eastern and Western borders; for the tribes those gentlemen were sent to were very much under the influence of the French. And further, what opportunity those missionaries had to instruct them was only at those forts, when they came in upon a Trading Design; and that as soon as they had done their business they went off, and while they stay'd, were not perhaps in the best temper to receive instruction. But as to the River Indians, the French had no influence upon them; a missionary might live among them, and take all opportunities to instruct not only the men but also their families; their children might be taught to read and write and be led into a knowledge of the principles of Christianity &c. The event prov'd these reasonings to be very just; for not long after those missionaries, Messrs. Parker, Hinsdel and Secomb, were discouraged and threw up their missions as not being able to answer the ends of them; but a mission to the River Indians proved more successful.

Some time after I informed the Rev. Mr. Stephen Williams<sup>2</sup> of Springfield of these suggestions, and what I had heard. And upon our motion the Rev. Mr. Williams of Hatfield<sup>3</sup> wrote to

<sup>1</sup> Trading-posts.

<sup>2</sup> Stephen Williams, born in Deerfield, Mass., May 14, 1693, died in Longmeadow, Mass., June 10, 1782, was taken captive by the Indians in 1704 in the famous attack on Deerfield. His experience is embodied in the *Memoir* of his father, Rev. John Williams.

The son was pastor at Longmeadow for sixty-six years.

<sup>3</sup> William Williams (1665-1741), a man of great ability and influence in the community. He was Congregational pastor at Hatfield for fifty years (1685-1735).

the Honourable and Rev. Commissioners at Boston,<sup>1</sup> who desired us that we would take a journey to Housatunnuk and confer with the Indians there respecting their receiving a missionary to instruct them. About this time his excellency Governor Belcher<sup>2</sup> was pleas'd to honour the two principal Indians of Housatunnuk with commissions. To Kunkapot he gave a Captain's, and to Umpachancee a Lieutenant's. Their commissions being sent to Springfield, we heard that they were coming for them, and therefore concluded we would confer with them here before we proceeded to Housatunnuk. Accordingly on the 22d day of May we went to their lodgings and discoursed with them by their interpreter, Jehoiakim VanValkenburgh, who came with them. The Captain shew'd himself very desirous of having a missionary sent amongst them, that their children might be taught to read &c. The Lieutenant did not seem so very desirous of it, but yet express'd his willingness that it should be so. But at the same time they let us know that they spake only for themselves, and that it would be needful their brethren should be consulted in the affair. We therefore informed them that some time in July they might expect to see us at Housatunnuk, where we would confer with them and their brethren further upon those things. But when the time came I was sick. The Rev. Mr. Bull<sup>3</sup> of Westfield therefore took my place and on the 8th of July, 1734, accompanied Mr. Williams thither. The Captain and Lieutenant were very glad to see them, and called their people together, of whom these Gentlemen inquir'd whether they were willing a minister should be sent to them to instruct them in the Christian religion, to teach their children to read, &c. The Indians desired four days to consider of the thing proposed, and at the end of those days they all gave in their names,

<sup>1</sup> Commissioners for Indian Affairs.

<sup>2</sup> Jonathan Belcher (1681-1757) was governor of Massachusetts and New Hampshire 1730-1741, and of New Jersey 1747-1757.

<sup>3</sup> Nehemiah Bull.

and signified their desires to those Reverend gentlemen, that a minister might be sent to them for the ends proposed. Upon which the Rev. Mr. Williams delivered to them a small belt of Wompum as a confirmation of what had passed between them, and a sort of record thereof.<sup>1</sup>

Not long after the return of those gentlemen from Housatunuk the Rev. Mr. Williams went to Boston, where he waited upon the Honourable Commissioners (his Excellency Governor Belcher being then at their head) and acquainted them with the good disposition of the Indians respecting the business they went upon. And the Commissioners were so encouraged by the account given them that they desir'd those gentlemen, Messieurs Williams and Bull, to seek after some suitable person to be employ'd as a missionary by those Indians: as appears by the following Vote: "At a meeting of the Commissioners for Indian Affairs, at the Council-Chamber in Boston, August 16th, 1734.

Present: His Excellency Governor BELCHER.

Thomas Hutchinson	} Esqrs.	{	Dr. Benjamin Colman
Edward Hutchinson			Dr. Joseph Sewall
Thomas Steel			Adam Winthrop

A Report of the Rev. Mr. Stephen Williams and the Rev. Mr.

<sup>1</sup> A Wompum is a small cylinder of about one-third of an inch long and as big round as a small straw, with a hole drilled through the middle of it lengthwise, and is made of the shell of some sea-fish, polished very smooth. A number of these, strung upon small threads and knit together in the form of a belt, are called a Belt of Wompum. Some of these Wompums are white, some black; the black bear the highest price. They pass among the Natives as money, and were the only coin the Indians had before they became acquainted with the Europeans. They also use them as ornaments, wearing them about their necks, wrists, &c. It is a custom among the Indians neighbouring to us, and I suppose among all others, to give belts of wompum for the confirmation of all treaties and as a remembrance of what passes between [the] parties; so that if one tribe sends a message to another without such a belt the message is call'd an empty word, not to be regarded or remember'd; but if a belt accompanies the message it is laid up as a record of the thing transacted; and by it not only the present but future generations keep in remembrance what was then done. And these are all the records they keep in such cases.



Nehemiah Bull, read, giving an account of their visitation lately made to the Indians at Housatunnuk, at the desire of the Commissioners, wherein is set forth their Conference with said Indians and their consent to receive instruction in the Christian Religion and their desire that the Commissioners would send them a Minister for that purpose.

Thereupon—

*Voted* That the said Messieurs Williams and Bull be desir'd to use their endeavours for obtaining a suitable person to go and reside there as their Minister, to instruct them and their children in religion and in reading, and to preach the Gospel to them on the Sabbaths. That they be allow'd to promise such suitable person, for his encouragement, the salary of one hundred pounds per Annum.

*A true copy*

Attest: *Adam Winthrop*

Before this time Mr. SERGEANT's Inclination to save the souls of the Natives had reached our ears; for he had freely said in private conversation that he had rather be employ'd as a Missionary to the natives, if a door should open for it, than accept a call any English parish might give him. Those gentlemen being inform'd of this, were not at a loss where to go, but made their application to him in September, 1734, at New Haven, where he was employ'd as one of the Tutors of Yale College. Their application to him, and his answer, I shall give the Reader in his own words, as I find them in the beginning of the Journal which he kept of his Mission to the River Indians at Housatunnuk:

“In September, 1734, the Rev. Mr. Stephen Williams and Mr. Nehemiah Bull, being appointed by the Gentlemen Commissioners in Boston to treat and agree with some person to undertake a Mission to the Indians of Housatunnuk, came to me at New Haven with the proposals; bringing a very encouraging account

of the good inclination of those Indians, and of their desire to be instructed in the principles of the Christian religion.

I was then engag'd in business at Yale College; but upon the fair probability there appear'd of success I told the gentlemen that I was so far from being unwilling to devote myself to the service of God in so good a cause, that I was rather desirous, if none better qualify'd could be found, to improve<sup>1</sup> what abilities I had in such an undertaking; tho' I was sensible I must not only lose a great many agreeable amusements of life, especially in leaving my business at College, which was the most agreeable to me that could be, but also expose myself to many fatigues and hardships, and I know not to what dangers, among a barbarous people. For indeed I should be ashamed to own myself a Christian, or even a Man, and yet utterly refuse doing what lay in my power to cultivate humanity among a people naturally ingenious enough, but for want of instruction living so much below the Dignity of human nature; and to promote the salvation of souls perishing in the Dark, when the Light of Life is so near them. Besides, to see so much pains taken by those of the Romish Church, not only in other parts but also in America (p. 6) and in our borders, whose religion is so corrupted that it may scarcely be called Christianity, should methinks excite us to emulation, who at least think we profess Christianity in much greater purity.

Upon the earnest desire of the two forementioned gentlemen I readily consented to undertake the Mission, if I might be accepted upon the terms I propos'd, *viz.*: that with the approbation of the Rev. Rector and Trustees of Yale College I would spend about half the year with the Indians and the rest of the year live at College (for I had a mind to carry my pupils through the course of their studies who now were entering upon their last year) and afterward, if there should be any reasonable encouragement I would devote myself entirely to the service of instructing the In-

<sup>1</sup> Occupy, use.

dians. This they agreed to, and therefore the Rev. Mr. Williams immediately wrote to the honourable Adam Winthrop, Esq., one of the Commissioners at Boston, to inform him how far they had proceeded."

The terms propos'd by Mr. SERGEANT were agreeable to the Commissioners, as appears from the following letter from the honourable Adam Winthrop, their Secretary:

"Sir:

By a letter just received from the Rev. Mr. Stephen Williams, I am inform'd he has treated with you about engaging in the Indians' service at Housatunnuk. And I am highly gratified with the encouraging account he gives of your Ingenuity, Learning and Piety, and also with your laudable inclination to undertake the Service. The only difficulty he mentions is that the Rector, Trustees, and also your pupils were unwilling you should leave the College till they had done reciting; but that if the Commissioners would be satisfied with your residing at Housatunnuk one Quarter of a year now, and then leave the Indians till the Spring, you would return and tarry. And Mr. Williams desir'd that it might be signify'd as soon as possible whether the Commissioners would accept this Projection.

Time would not allow of a full meeting, but I have conferr'd with his Excellency the Governor about it, and we do, in the name of the Commissioners, accept of the proposal; so that you may proceed and go to Mr. Williams's, who informs me that he will accompany you to Housatunnuk.

I heartily wish you, thro' the Divine blessing, good success and much comfort in the Employment; and, desiring to hear from you in answer to this, I remain, Sir,

Your hearty friend and servant,

ADAM WINTHROP.

Accordingly Mr. SERGEANT proceeded to Housatunnuk, and in his *Journal* gives the following brief account of his journey, and the reception he met with there:

"October 8th.—I set out from New Haven and went to Mr. Bull's, who it was propos'd should bear me company to Housatunnuk and introduce me to the Indians, being something acquainted with them, as he had been there

before in the Summer with Mr. Williams, to treat with them in respect to their receiving the Gospel. From Westfield, on Thursday, October 11th, we set out in the afternoon, designing to lodge at a house about 15 miles onward upon the road, which was the only house before we came to Housatunnuk. But night coming on too soon for us, we were forced to lodge in the woods without fire or shelter. The next day we got to Housatunnuk a little before night, thro' a most doleful wilderness, and the worst road, perhaps, that ever was rid. We took care to inform the Indians we were come (they had expected us some time), and desir'd them to meet us the next day at a place we appointed, near the middle between the places where the Indians liv'd; for one half of them liv'd near four miles above, up the river, and the other about so much below.

October 13th.—In the afternoon I made a short discourse to the Indians by an interpreter, an Indian call'd Ebenezer, to which they (about twenty in number<sup>1</sup>) gave very good attention, especially Capt. Kunkapot their Chief, and his family. I adapted my discourse as well as I could to their capacities and manner of thinking. The next day Ebenezer told me that one who had been a little cold in the Design was mov'd with what I said, and seem'd now considerably engag'd. The interpreter could speak English very well, for he had liv'd with them and had got considerable knowledge in the principles of religion, and was very desirous Mr. Bull would baptize him. Accordingly, we met at the Lieutenant's house on Thursday, where Mr. Bull examin'd Ebenezer with respect to his knowledge and resolution to lead a Christian life, and he gave a pretty good account of the principles of the Christian religion, and said he would rather burn in the fire than forsake the truth. Mr. Bull made a prayer, which Ebenezer interpreted, and I deliver'd another short discourse, after which Ebenezer was baptized by Mr. Bull, making the following renunciation of heathenism, profession of Christianity, and promise of a good life:

Through the goodness of God towards me, in bringing me into the way of the knowledge of the Gospel, I am convinc'd of the truth of the Christian religion, and that it is the only way that leads to salvation and happiness. I therefore freely and heartily forsake heathenish darkness, and embrace the light of the Gospel and the way of Holiness, and do now, in presence of Almighty God, the searcher of Hearts, and before many witnesses, seriously and solemnly take the Lord Jehovah to be my God and Portion, Jesus Christ his Son to be my Lord Redeemer, and the Holy Ghost to be my Sanctifier and Teacher. And do Covenant and Promise by the help of Divine Grace that I will cleave to the Lord with purpose of heart, believing his

<sup>1</sup> Mr. SERGEANT notes in his *Journal* some time after this, that when he speaks of his hearers he intends only adult persons, and is so to be understood here and elsewhere.



revealed Truths, as far as I can gain the knowledge of them, obeying his commands, both those which mark out my duty and those that forbid sin, sincerely and uprightly to the end of my life.

Here Ebenezer shew'd us a little boy named *Showanun*, who being in the woods with his father, at a considerable distance, and hearing that I was coming and would teach the children to read, would stay no longer with his father, but was resolv'd to come home, tho' his father (to try him I suppose) told him if he left him nobody would take care of him, to provide him victuals and cloaths; but he would not be dissuaded from coming home to learn his book. And what makes this the more remarkable in the boy is that he is exceeding fond of his father, as his father is also fond of him. The Indians, as has been observ'd, living in two places about eight or ten miles asunder, it was needful that they should come together in one place, that they on the Sabbath might attend upon Mr. SERGEANT's preaching and have their children taught on the week days. When therefore they were together at Lieutenant Umpachenee's house they discours'd the matter, and concluded that during the winter season they would dwell together about half way between those places where each party then lived; the place being well accommodated with wood and water, and also near some English families, in one of which Mr. SERGEANT might live while he serv'd them; but this could continue no longer than the Spring, when they must return to their own places, to plant, &c.

Lord's Day, October 20th.—I made two discourses to the Indians (in number the same as before), to which they gave great attention and seem'd to be well pleased. They were interpreted by Mr. Van Valkenburgh, a Dutchman.

On Monday, October 21st. They chearfully set about building a publick house at the place agreed upon, to serve them both to meet in on the Sabbath and to keep the school in; round which they built small huts for their several families to dwell in. The chearfulness and engagedness they discover'd herein was an evidence of the ardent desires they had to hear the Word preach'd, and to have their children taught to read: and in a short time they all mov'd with their families thither. While these things were doing Mr. Sergeant went up to Wnahktukook, the place where the Captain and some others lived, to teach their children to read, and was greatly pleas'd with the respect they shew'd him, and with



the children, they being exceedingly engag'd to learn. He went also to Skatehook, the place where the Lieutenant and four families more liv'd, and taught their children, the number at each place being about nine or ten.

The number of Mr. Sergeant's auditors now began to increase. Lord's Day, November 3, he writes:

"My Auditory was greater than it has been; and now, besides preaching, I pray'd by an interpreter.

And to move our pity to the poor heathen who are brought up in ignorance, he proceeds thus:

"After service they invited me to go the next day up to Wnahtukook, to see a religious ceremony they had learn'd of their fathers. Accordingly I went. Ebenezer bore me company, of whom I enquir'd, to satisfy my curiosity, into the Notions, Customs and Manners of their Nation. Among other things, he told me of some he had known who were Atheists, who suppos'd all things began, continu'd and ceas'd, according to the several laws of their natures, without any cause or direction from a Superiour hand. Others believ'd the Sun to be God, or at least the Body or residence of the Deity; but that now they generally believ'd the existence of one supreme, invisible Being, the Maker of all things. He told me also sundry childish and ridiculous things which they believ'd; as that the seven stars were so many Indians translated to heaven in a dance; that the stars in *Charles's Wain* are so many men hunting a bear; that they begin the chase in the Spring and hold it all Summer; by the Fall they have wounded it and that the blood turns the leaves red; by the Winter they have killed it and the snow is made of its fat, which being melted by the heat of the Summer, makes the sap of Trees.<sup>1</sup>

There is a large heap of stones, I suppose ten cart-loads, in the Way to Wnahtukook, which the Indians have thrown together as they have pass'd by the place; for it us'd to be their custom, every time any one pass'd by, to throw a stone upon it. But what was the end of it they cannot tell; only they say their fathers us'd to do so, and they do it because it was the custom of their fathers. But Ebenezer says he supposes it was design'd

<sup>1</sup> I leave the reader to conjecture whence these *Americans* happened to form their notion so similar to that of the *Europeans*, who call these stars the Great Bear.

to be as an expression of their gratitude to the Supreme Being, that he had preserv'd them to see the place again. These things Ebenezer told me by the way, as we were riding to Wnahtukook, which are such childish fables that I had not taken notice of them, had it not been that they believ'd them, as childish as they are; which shows us how easily men brought up in ignorance are impos'd upon, and should methinks excite us the more to pity them. When we were come to the Captain's house, there were several of our Indians there, as well as from below as those that belong'd there. After we had been there for some time two men appointed for the service took a deer down that hung up in the Wigwam,<sup>1</sup> which was to be offer'd, and laid the four quarters upon a bark in the middle of the house (the rest sitting round very serious) the skin was taken off with the entire head and neck to the shoulders; the four quarters were laid one upon another, and the skin doubled lengthwise was laid upon them, so as to make it look as much like a whole deer as might be. When this was done an elderly man appointed for that purpose stood up over it, and with a pretty loud voice spake to the following purpose: 'O great God, pity us, grant us food to eat, afford us good and comfortable sleep, preserve us from being devoured by the fowls that fly in the air. This deer is given in token that we acknowledge thee the giver of all things.' Then he halloo'd pretty loud, that God might hear and take notice of what they were doing. Then he that made the offering gave the *pro tempore* Priest (for they have no stated one) a string of Wompum which was to pay him for his service; after which he halloo'd again. After these ceremonies were ended the two men before mentioned cut the deer in pieces and boil'd it; and when it was made ready a piece was given to every one, of which they all eat except he that offer'd it (for he eats none of it), which is to signify it is a gift, and therefore free, and he desires none of it back again. While they were eating one of the waiters gave the skin with the feet, and some of the inwards, to an old Widow woman, which is a deed of charity they always practice upon such occasions. Upon inquiry into the original of this piece of Religion they gave me the following fabulous account of the first institution of it: They had receiv'd it by tradition from their fathers, that there once liv'd a Man among them who was seen to come

<sup>1</sup> A *wigwam* is an Indian house, in building of which they take small flexible poles and stick them into the ground, round such a space as they intend for the bigness of their house, whether greater or less. Those poles they bend from each side and fasten them together, making an arch overhead. Then they fasten small sticks to them, cutting the poles at right angles, which serve for ribs. After which they cover the whole with the bark of trees, leaving a hole in the top for the smoak to go out, and at one or both ends to go in and out.

down from Heaven with snow-shoes on (which was the original of snow-shoes)—that he liv'd in great reputation among them, was esteem'd a Hero and a Prophet. He clear'd their country of monsters that infested their roads, and taught them that this was a religious custom in the country above from whence he came; and of him they learnt this piece of religion. That he married a wife among them and had two children by her, and that when they offer'd a deer he us'd to be their priest; but sometimes he omitted praying upon such occasions, which the Indians found fault with; and this coming to the Ears of his wife she inform'd him. He confessed it a faulty neglect, and apologizing as well as he could for himself, promis'd he would do it next time. And accordingly, when the next occasion offer'd, he began to pray with his two children upon his knees, and was in a wonderful manner rais'd from the ground, rising gradually as he continu'd praying; but when he had got just to the top of the wigwam they call'd to him to leave one of his children, at least, behind him—and letting one down, he was carried up out of their sight. This child of his also prov'd an Extraordinary man, of whom they tell several very ridiculous stories, which yet they believe with a firm faith."

The above Historical Account I have not inserted so much for its being curious, as to excite compassion towards such ignorant creatures, and the charitable endeavours of generous Minds to bring them out of such a benighted state.

November 5th Mr. Sergeant begun to keep school, in the school house which the Indians had built; and on the next week his scholars were in number twenty-two or twenty-three, as he writes; and on the following week two new scholars were added to their number. These he instructed on the week days, and preach'd on the Sabbaths.

The following passages in Mr. Sergeant's *Journal* well deserve the attention of those who are concern'd for the English Interest in America, and for the Spiritual good of the Indians:

"Monday, November the 25th.—I went to Albany, being desir'd by the Ministers of the Country to inquire after the disposition of the Mohawks and the rest of the Indians in friendship with the English, towards the Christian Religion; carrying a letter from the Rev. Mr. Williams of Hat-

field to the Hon. Philip Livingston, Esq.,<sup>1</sup> to desire of him information in that matter. Mr. Livingston told me there was great probability that the Protestant religion might, if proper means were us'd, be introduc'd among most of those nations; and he look'd upon it [as] absolutely necessary in order to preserve the trade with them and keep them in friendship with the English; for the French of Canada were very industrious to gain them over to their interest; and that they have missionaries among them who came as near to their Government as they dare; that the Indians are drawn off more or less every year to Canada. Much the same account other Gentlemen gave me. Mr. Barclay, an ingenious and religious young gentleman, has been about a year and a half among the Mohawks, and is learning their language and designs to get Episcopal ordination to be a Missionary among them, if the Society for Propagating the Gospel in Foreign Parts will support him. He has allow'd him a small encouragement from the Government two years, thirty pound per annum. I saw him little more than half a year ago at this place, when he told me he had all the encouragement that could be expected from the Indians, had wrought some considerable reformation in their morals, and that they lov'd him entirely. The Mohawks are generally professors of Christianity, but for want of instruction have but little of it in reality. And methinks it is great pity so ingenious and worthy a gentleman as Mr. Barclay should want any encouragement in so great and noble an undertaking. He now reads to them every Lord's Day the prayers in the Liturgy which are translated into their language, with some lessons out of the New Testament, besides some Manuscript Discourses made by a former Missionary, which he has got. But he has no stated interpreter, and when he has occasion for one is oblig'd to pay him out of his own pocket. In a word, he is alone in that noble design."

Mr. Sergeant left the College, designing to return to it again, as has been observ'd. The Rev. Mr. Stephen Williams therefore, and some others, being very desirous that the Indians might be instructed while Mr. Sergeant was absent; prevail'd with Mr. Timothy Woodbridge of Springfield to go to them. And when Mr. Sergeant return'd from his forementioned journey he writes thus: "Upon my return from Albany, which was on Saturday, November 30th, I found Mr. Timothy Woodbridge, a young gentleman very well qualify'd for the business, sent up here to

<sup>1</sup> The "Signer."



take care of the School and to instruct the Indians in a catechetical way, when I should return to my business at College."

Tho' things had succeeded hitherto according to Mr. Sergeant's desires, yet the week before he return'd to college he met with some things very discouraging, of which he gives the following account in his *Journal*:

"Lord's Day, December 8th.—I had but very few hearers, the reason of which was that some of the Traders had been down from Hudson's River, and brought a large quantity of Rum and sold to the Indians, with which they got drunk and continued so for several days, and had not got over it by the Sabbath. This was the most discouraging week I had: for the Dutch traders, I was told, had been very industrious to discourage the Indians from being Christians, thinking it would lessen their trade with them, or at least they should not be under so good advantages to cheat and impose upon them. For they make vast profit by selling them rum, and making bargains with them while they are drunk; and drunkenness is a vice the Indians are extremely addicted to. These traders tell them that the religion we are about to teach them is not a good one; that we design in the end to serve ourselves by them, to make slaves of them and their children—and the like. They also took occasion from the Law there is in this Province against private persons selling the Indians strong drink, to prejudice them against the Government and people, as tho' we were not their friends. Upon these insinuations I understood some of the Indians were very much disgusted and affronted; that the Lieutenant was out of humour [and] that his brother especially was in a great passion, who is a considerable man among them.

Upon this information I desir'd the Captain and Lieutenant to come to my Landlord's on Lord's Day evening (designing the next day to leave them). Accordingly they came, and I endeavour'd to remove those prejudices, and to persuade them those insinuations were utterly groundless and false; that the traders doubtless were the men that intended to make a prey of them and their children; and labour'd to satisfy them that the foremention'd law was design'd in their favour, to prevent their abusing themselves and exposing themselves to the abuses of others; that the Government did not design to prevent their having strong drink, for in other places some trusty persons have had commissions to sell them liquor and other things they wanted, at the same rate they go at in Boston, and orders to allow them the same price for their goods as they would fetch at Boston. With

what I said they seem'd well satisfied; especially Kunkapot, for he saw thro' the design of the Traders, and as he is a temperate man himself, so he is very much griev'd at the intemperance of his people,—and tho' he be calm and moderate in his temper, yet he show'd considerable warmth and passion at the wicked and ungenerous treatment of the traders."

The neighbourhood of the Dutch to these Indians has often prov'd a disadvantage and snare to them, and it is to be fear'd will prove so still, for the Indians have often occasion to go among them upon business and to visit their brethren. Upon those occasions the Dutch do not fail of tempting them to drunkenness, if there is any prospect of their finding their account in it; and 'tis to be feared some of them tempt them to excess on purpose to disappoint the designs of Christianizing them. And without doubt the many relapses into intemperance that have appear'd among the Indians, after their profession of Christianity (of which have happen'd too many instances) have been owing to the wicked practice of the Dutch. And as if other temptations were not enough, they too often recommend drunkenness to them by their own example.

The time was now come when Mr. Sergeant was oblig'd to return to his business at College; and as a proper expedient to forward the design he was now engag'd in, he propos'd to take two Indian children with him, intending thereby to lead them into some acquaintance with the English language and manners. And therefore, at the close of the conference he had with the Captain and Lieutenant mentioned above, he propos'd it to them, and in his *Journal* gives this account of the matter:

"Then I ask'd them if they would let two of their children go and live with me at New Haven the rest of the winter; and they agreed that the Captain's only son, Nungkawwat, and the Lieutenant's oldest son, Etowaukaum (who by the way is grandson by his mother to Etowaukaum, Chief of the River Indians, who was in England in Queen Anne's reign), should be the children. They were both young, Nungkawwat about nine years old, Etowaukaum about eight; yet they were not only willing to go with me

they knew not whither, but had a mind to it. And the next morning, Monday, December the 9th, we set out for New Haven, leaving Mr. Woodbridge in the school. The boys went away with a good courage and held out a long and tedious journey in a cold season, with wonderful resolution.

December 14th.—We got to New Haven. I took the boys into my own chamber at College and sent them to the free school kept at New Haven. They liv'd very contentedly, were made much of by everybody; for indeed they were a couple of very likely boys, especially the Lieutenant's son."

The prudent measures Mr. Sergeant took with the Indians, the little time he spent with them before his return to College, the success had, the hopes he conceiv'd of being further serviceable to them, together with the opposition he met with in prosecuting his good design, the reader may best learn from the following letter which he wrote to the Commissioners soon after he got to New Haven (how soon I am not certain, for the copy of it before me has no date) and directed it to the Honourable Adam Winthrop, Esq., their Secretary:

*"Honourable Sir:*

Your Honour's of November 13th I received at Westfield in my return from Housatunnuk. 'Tis no small satisfaction to me that your honour, with the rest of the Honourable and Reverend Commissioners, are pleas'd to entertain a good opinion of me. I have had the approbation of my conscience in the business I have undertaken, nor have I been at all discontented. Thro' the blessing of God the Design has hitherto succeeded full to my expectation, except that I have not had quite so many auditors as I hop'd to have (there being generally about thirty). There has been about twenty-five scholars in the School, besides some older ones, who took some pains to learn their letters; but I suppose their patience will hardly hold out to learn to read well. They have always treated me with respect and kindness, in their way. The children in the school I think were fond of me, and they all seem'd to put great confidence in me, and what I believe you will think a sufficient evidence of it is, I have brought away with me two little boys. One is Captain Kunkapot's only son, nam'd Nungkawwat, about nine years old; the other is Lieutenant Umpachenee's eldest son, Eto-waukaum, about eight years old. The lads had a great mind to come with me, and their parents were very willing they should. They bore the fa-



tigues of the journey well, and have been very contented since they have been here. My design in bringing them is to teach them English, and to learn Indian of them as well as I can. I design to keep them, until I return to Housatunnuk, in the Town School, for my time is so taken up with College business that I cannot teach them myself.

I could not have the opinion of the Gentlemen Commissioners, but I doubt not but what I have done will be grateful to them. However, I did not design they should be burdensome to the Society, and hope to find so much charity amongst gentlemen in these parts, as to bear the charges of their board and schooling. They are two very likely lads, and if I do not judge amiss the Indian children excell the generality of ours in pregnancy of parts and good humour. I am sure I could not have found an English school anywhere that would have pleas'd me so much. Captain Kunkapot is an excellent man, and I do believe has the true spirit of Christianity in him. He knows a great deal, and by the character all his acquaintance give of him his conduct is unexceptionable. I found them generally possess with the belief of One Supreme Being, the Maker and Governor of all things, and that they acknowledg'd the difference between moral good and evil; that God regards the actions of mankind, in order to reward or punish them in some future state of existence. I have endeavour'd to give them right notions of these matters and to establish them in the belief of them. And from these principles, together with such other arguments as I thought most convincing to them, to persuade them of the necessity of a supernatural revelation, and to satisfy them that this is contain'd in the Holy Scriptures. I desir'd them from time to time to let me know if they had any doubts with respect to anything I had taught them, or they had otherwise heard, of the Christian religion, but tho' they were inquisitive in some points, yet they never seem'd dispos'd to contradict what I said. I have (after I had in several discourses told them what I thought previously necessary) given them a brief account of the Original of Things, the state of mankind at the first, the Fall, and unhappy consequences of it, the most remarkable dispensations of Divine Providence recorded in the Old Testament, God's chusing a peculiar people to himself, his most remarkable dealings with them till his final rejection of them, a short history of our Saviour's birth, life, actions and death; an account of his doctrines and precepts; in every discourse making such practical reflections as I tho't convenient for them. They were generally all present that liv'd thereabouts, and gave very good attention.

After they had finished the School House (which was in the beginning



of November) they mov'd to that place with their families, where they now live. The Scholars in the school make very good proficiency. I suppose the Gentlemen Commissioners are before now inform'd of Mr. Woodbridge's character, and the reason of putting him into the School, &c. The children began to be fond of him before I came away. There is a fair prospect of considerable things being done among them. I found nothing on the part of the Indians but what was encouraging, except their inclination to strong drink. But from other people there are many discouragements. They are a loose, vicious people they live among, and there are some so prodigiously wicked as to endeavour all they can to discourage them; especially the Dutch traders, whose gain is all their godliness; and this poor people's ignorance and vice is their gain. They trade with them very much in Rum, which is the destruction of everything that's good among them. To discourage them they tell them that our religion is not a good one, and that we design only to make slaves of them. They take advantage from the law of your Province against selling strong liquor to them, to prejudice them against the English. The traders themselves evade the force of the law by leaving their rum just without the borders of the Province, from whence the Indians fetch it themselves. The week before I came away they had a drunken frolick which lasted three or four days. Kunkapot always keeps clear of such frolicks, and Umpachenee had so much the command of himself as to refrain at that time. God only knows what may and will be effected; but I am much afraid that the Dutch will discourage many of them; for they have great influence over the Indians. As for the old ones, who are much addicted to drinking, nothing but the extraordinary power that attended Christianity in its first propagation will be sufficient to reform them. The young I have great hopes of, if God is pleas'd to bless suitable endeavours with them.

I hop'd they (the Indians) would have had a general meeting of the tribe while I was with them, but their business (hunting) made them defer it till since I came away; and I suppose 'tis to be about this time. What will be concluded in that meeting will either add life to our design, or almost entirely quash it.

I am sensible I have drawn out this letter to a very great length—but if I am tedious I will not be more so by apologizing for it, but only beg leave to subscribe myself

Your and the rest of the Commissioners' most obedient humble servant,  
JOHN SERGEANT."

On the 19th of December Mr. Sergeant wrote to the Indians, directing his letter to the Captain, Lieutenant and the rest. And that the reader may see what pains he took to accommodate himself to their infant state of knowledge, I will transcribe some passages out of it:

*"My good Friends and Brethren:*

You are always in my heart, and I cease not every day to pray to God for you—I hope that you are convince'd that men ought to do good, and that God will reward them that do so, and that God will punish them that live wickedly.—That Book that there is one great God above all, who is most powerful, wise, just and good. The Bible also teaches us that there is one Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, born into the world of a Virgin mother, and died to save Sinners. For we are all Sinners, and deserve to be punish'd, but Christ took upon himself the punishment due to us. I know you have many temptations to draw back. They cannot be your friends that try to discourage you. They only endeavour to keep you in ignorance, that they may be under better advantage to cheat you. Knowledge is certainly good: it is to the mind what light is to the eye. You would think them your greatest enemies that should endeavour to put out your eyes, especially if you were travelling a difficult road. This world is like a thick and intangled Wilderness; and why should not you, as well as other people, enjoy the benefit of the light? Truth is more precious than the light of the sun. Don't suffer your enemies to impose upon you.

I am your most hearty friend, and most willing to serve you in all things.

JOHN SERGEANT."

This letter was very acceptable to the Indians; and the more so because it came to them a little before a general meeting of the River Indians, at Housatunnuk, at which they were to consider whether it was best that the Indians there should go on to receive Instruction or not.

It is a custom among the Indians not to proceed in any affair of importance till they have the consent of the several Clans belonging to the Nation; and the Indians at Housatunnuk having proceeded so far without the general consent of their Brethren, were

much concern'd lest they should be frown'd upon at the approaching Meeting—and the more so because they had heard that the Indians of Hudson's River highly resented their receiving a Minister and Schoolmaster before they had gain'd the approbation of the rest of their Tribe; yea, there was a report that a design was on foot to poison the Captain and Lieutenant on that account, as also because they had receiv'd commissions from his Excellency Governor Belcher. Whether there was any just ground for these reports, or whether they were set on foot by the Dutch traders to discourage the Indians at Housatunnuk, I am not able to say. But however that was, the Indians were so affected with these flying stories that they sent, desiring some of the Ministers of the County would come to them and be present at their general meeting.

Accordingly, January 15th, 1734-5, the Rev. Mr. Stephen Williams of Springfield, and I, accompany'd by John Ashley, Esq., of Westfield, went to Housatunnuk. The Indians who were expected from Hudson's River came not till Saturday, which was the 19th of the month. On the Sabbath Mr. Williams, being desir'd by the Captain and Lieutenant, preach'd to the Indians by an Interpreter in number about a hundred and fifty or two hundred, great and small. I was with the English at Sheffield, who were then destitute of a Minister.

To give the particulars of our proceedings with those Indians (a journal of which the Rev. Mr. Williams kept and is now before me) would be too prolix. I chuse, therefore, for brevity's sake, to give the reader a concise account of them, from a letter which Mr. Williams wrote to a gentleman in Boston, which was printed in Mr. Appleton's Preface to his sermon preach'd at Mr. Sergeant's ordination, and is as follows: "We had diverse conferences with the Indians, and read to them a letter from the honourable John Stoddard, Esq.; and endeavoured to answer their objections, etc., and so far satisfy'd those that came from other places that they thanked us for the pains we had taken, and desir'd Mr. Wood-

bridge might continue among them (at Housatunnuk) and that Mr. Sergeant would return to them; and said they would give an account to their several towns of what we had offer'd to them; and gave us encouragement that they would as a nation submit to instruction."

Mr. Sergeant's account of what follow'd upon this general meeting of the Indians I will give in his own words:

It happened as soon as this Meeting (drinking and frolicking always concluded such meetings) was over, that several of our Indians were taken sick, and two men, seiz'd with a violent fever, died suddenly. This, with the apprehension they had before of mischief design'd by some of the other Indians that came from the neighbouring Government, put them into a great fright and made them suspect that those persons were poison'd. Tho' I believe the suspicion was groundless; for it is so far from being strange to me that some are sick after such a frolick, that I rather wonder they don't half die—for their dancing is a most laborious exercise. They dance round a hot fire till they are almost ready to faint and are wet with sweat, and then run out and, stripping themselves naked, expose their bodies to the cold air; and if there be snow upon the ground, roll in it till they are cold and then return to their dancing again, and when they are hot and tir'd, cool themselves in the same manner—and it may be repeat this four or five times in a night, concluding the frolic with excessive drinking; and when they are drunk often fall asleep in the open air, perhaps buried in snow.

This general Meeting happen'd in a very cold season, and when there was a very deep snow upon the ground—and I could never learn that there was any certain symptom of poison.

However the Indians were persuaded they were poison'd, and concluded to apply to some invisible power for the discovery of the murderers. I shall give an account of this matter as it was related by Mr. Woodbridge, in a letter to Mr. Williams in the following words, viz:

"On the 21st of February, 1734-5, in the afternoon, Captain Kunkapot inform'd me that he was going down to the Lieutenant's Wigwam, to find out who poison'd those two men that lately died there. I tho't of nothing further than that they were going to make a proper search into the matter,



and therefore said nothing to dissuade him. About eight of the clock in the evening Ebenezer came to me, and told me they were going to *Paw-naw*,<sup>1</sup> (as we call it) that they might discover the murderers that way; for they expected that those who did the Fact would appear to their priests. I immediately rode down to them, found upwards of forty Indians at the Lieutenant's wigwam,<sup>2</sup> which was swept clean, good fires made up, and the Indians seated on each side of the fires, from end to end of the wigwam, except a space of about five or six feet, which was left at one end of the wigwam for the priests, or *pawwaws*. Every Indian had two sticks about a foot and a half long, one of them split at the end, which they held under their legs as they sat. When I went in they were all prepar'd for the exercise, but had not begun. I ask'd them if they were willing I should be present to see their Devotion—and before they gave me an answer the oldest priest lift up his eyes towards Heaven, and spake very earnestly; after which they told me I might be there. They began with rapping their sticks and singing, their eldest priest sitting and talking, and acting a different part from the rest. This continu'd about an hour. Then the priest rose up and threw off all his cloathes, except the flap that cover'd his nakedness; and then, naked, pass'd from one end of the wigwam to the other, with his eyes fast shut, seeming to be in the utmost agony, used all the frightful motions and distorted gestures imaginable. This continu'd about another hour. Then the first priest, being beat out, retir'd, and a second one rose and acted the same part; so a third and a fourth. This continu'd all night, without any intermission except some short intervals in which they smoak'd a pipe, and sometimes for a short space they all got up and danc'd.

After I had seen these things (which it is impossible to describe) I took an opportunity to inform them how improper such a method of worship was: how sinful and displeasing to the great God. Upon which they told me they knew no harm in it—they made their application to the great God, and to no other. I inform'd them that God was not to be worship'd in such a manner; and when I had instructed them as well as I could, they resolv'd never to do so any more, and those of them who had been best taught were much troubled, that they had taken so wrong a step." Thus far Mr. Wood-bridge.

Mr. Sergeant goes on and observes that the Indians us'd to have

<sup>1</sup> Usually spelled Pow-wow.

<sup>2</sup> This wigwam of the Lieutenant's, if I mistake not, is about fifty or sixty feet in length.

an high opinion of these Pawwaws (whose character answers pretty well to the vulgar notions of Wizards and Conjurers) and tell stories of the great feats which they can do. However, they confess they have no power over Christians. And concludes with these words: "There may be something, for aught I know, in what they say; but I am apt to think they are very much impos'd upon by such kind of Pretenders, as the rest of the ignorant part of the world is."

In the beginning of February Ebenezer visited Mr. Sergeant at New Haven, by whom he wrote another letter to the Indians, some passages of which are as follows:

*"To all my good Friends the River Indians at Housatunnuk,  
Health, etc.:"*

I am very glad to hear you are all well and that all things go well with you. My heart is with you, tho' I am so far from you; but the greatest pleasure of all is, that you have it yet in your hearts to become Christians. When I had heard that you concluded, in your late general meeting, to embrace Christianity, it was more pleasing to me than cold water to a thirsty man in the heat of summer, or a plentiful meal to one almost starv'd with hunger, or good success to one who has hunted a great while in vain.

I hope you will be a wise and knowing people, and that you will learn to know the true God, the maker of all things and the Governor of them. It cannot be long before both you and I must die, and give an account of ourselves to the great God who is high above all. Oh, how shall we blame ourselves forever if we neglect our present opportunity of preparing ourselves for death—but on the contrary how glad shall we be even to die, that we may go to God, and to Jesus Christ who died for us, if we are careful now to please God and to prepare ourselves for Heaven! O that I could make you sensible of the importance of these things! I hope to see you again and to instruct you more fully in these things; but in the meantime I pray you, for your souls' sake, to embrace the Christian religion and to make use of the advantages God gives you, to learn the Truth and to obey it. I pray the great God to bless you in this world with all good things, and in the world to come to bestow on you eternal life. This is the hearty prayer of your assur'd friend.

JOHN SERGEANT.

NEW HAVEN, February 4th, 1734-5."

About the middle of February is the time when the Indians of Housatunnuk leave their habitation and go with their families into the Woods, to make their year's stock of sugar; and the season for this business lasts till the end of March, and sometimes to the middle of April. Therefore, when the Indians went into the woods and took their children with them, Mr. Woodbridge, their school-master, made a visit to his friend at Springfield. By him the Indians wrote a letter to some of the Ministers of the county, informing them that tho' their business now call'd them, with their families, abroad, yet in a little time they should return again with their families to their habitations, and receive further instruction; and desir'd that their remove might not be interpreted as tho' they were disaffected to the Christian religion; and express'd their resolution to proceed in it, and to use their further endeavours to increase in Christian knowledge when they should return from their business of making sugar.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The Indians make their sugar of the sap of maple trees. They extract the sap by cutting the tree on one side, in such a form as that the sap will naturally gather into a small channel at the bottom of the hole cut, where they fix into the tree a small chip, of six or eight inches long, which carries the sap off from the tree into a vessel set to receive it. Thus they tap a number of trees; and when the vessels are full they gather the sap and boil it to such a degree of consistence as to make sugar. After it is boil'd they take it off the fire, and stir it till it is cold, which is their way of graining it. The sugar is very good, of a very agreeable taste, and esteemed the most wholesome of any. It might doubtless be made in great plenty, and I cannot but think, to the great profit of the undertakers. If some man would build him a sugar house and provide a set of boilers, and other utensils as they have in the West Indies, I am persuaded he would find his account in it, beyond what those in the West Indies can do; for the gentleman who hath a plantation in the West Indies is at great expense in preparing his ground; planting his cane and cultivating it for more than a year before it is fit for use; in cutting, trimming and topping it, for mills to grind it, and not till all this be done is the sap of the cane ready for boiling. All this charge might be subtracted from the gentleman's account who uses maple trees instead of cane, except the expence of tapping the trees and gathering the sap, which is as nothing compar'd with the other. It is true indeed that the sap of maple trees is not so rich as that of the sugar cane, but I suppose the disproportion is not by far so great as that of the expence; for I have been inform'd that two men, under the disadvantages of boiling it in two kettles and that in the open air, have in a good season made a barrel in a week. What then would a number of hands do, with a sett of West India boilers, coolers and other advantages of dispatch which they are furnish'd with? Trees fit for this business are very plenty in the vast uncultivated wilderness between Connecticut and

To this letter the Ministers wrote an answer, April 10, 1735, expressing the satisfaction they took in the good disposition of the Indians and their resolution express'd in the letter they had receiv'd from them, and their willingness to contribute to their advantage as far as was in their power.

In the beginning of May several of the Indians went to New Haven, and waited upon Mr. Sergeant to Housatunnuk; the account of which I shall give in his own words:

"May the 6th. Came Captain Kunkapot, Lieutenant Umpachenee, his brother Johtohkuhkoonant, and Ebenezer, to New Haven, to wait upon me up and to carry the boys back who had been with me all winter. The lads had learnt to read and write English very well for the time. Johtohkuhkoonant had been a very vicious fellow, and a very bitter enemy to the Gospel; but a little before this he came strangely about, and was much in favour of the Christian religion; undertook to learn to read, and made extraordinary proficiency in it. I entertain'd these men with as much respect and kindness as I could; shew'd them our library and the rarities of the College; with which they seem'd to be well pleas'd; and behav'd themselves while they were there, well, and with much decency."

May the 8th, Mr. Sergeant left New Haven, those men accompanying him, and got to Housatunnuk on the 10th, at night.

"Lord's Day, May the 11th. I preach'd to an auditory of about twenty in number, who gave great attention, and some of them were very much affected with what I said. The Lieutenant's wife wept almost all the time;

Hudson's rivers, as also in all the northern borders of this Province. And could the one-half of them be us'd, I suppose they would more than furnish all the British colonies upon the Continent with sugar. The Molasses that is made of this sap is exceedingly good, and considerably resembles honey. Three, or at most four barrels of this sap, reduced to one by boiling, will ferment, and makes a very pleasant drink, which is sufficiently spirituous, and I suppose by being distill'd would make excellent *Rum*; tho' the experiment has not, that I know of, been yet made. The trees, after they have been us'd three or four years successively, must then rest as many years; and after they are recruited serve again, as well or better than ever. The second and third years they are better than the first, because then the sap is richer than at first, tho' not quite so plenteous.

The season for this business is from the beginning of February to the end of March—a time when people are as much at leisure as ever. Would it not therefore be prudent for those who have a sufficient number of these trees on their new farms, to spare them, and use them from year to year, to supply themselves with those commodities?



and others of them frequently shed tears, especially the Captain was often very much affected.

"The Indians now seem'd to be in a very good temper, and as I was told had the greatest opinion of and love for me. Now the Indians were parted again from the school-house, and liv'd some of them at Wnahktukook and some at Skatekook; for at those places they planted their corn and beans, which is all the Husbandry they carry on. For the rest of their living they depend upon hunting."

During Mr. Sergeant's short tarry with the Indians (which was but sixteen days) he and Mr. Woodbridge both kept school; one at one place and the other at the other, each taking his turn a week at a place. The week Mr. Sergeant kept at Wnahktukook he liv'd at Kunkapot's house, and was very well entertain'd.

May 26th. Mr. Sergeant return'd again to his business at New Haven, from whence he wrote the following letter to the Rev. Dr. Colman, one of the Commissioners at Boston:

*"Reverend Sir:*

Though I am not so happy as to have much personal acquaintance with you, yet your known character in general, and especially your relation to the affair I have been engag'd in, has made me hope I shall have your pardon for the trouble I now give you.

"'Tis but lately I return'd from Housatunnuk, and I doubt not but you will rejoice to be inform'd of the happy success God has been pleas'd to bless the endeavours with that have been us'd to convert the heathen there to the Christian faith. They are, I think, now resolv'd to be Christians, and are earnestly desirous to be taught. The fondness they shew for me is surprizing, and considering how much a stranger I am to them, their own barbarous education, and how little I have done to win them there appears something more than human in it. And I think they are now in a better disposition than I left them in last Fall.

"I am very willing (if the Gentlemen Commissioners please) to devote my life to the service of their souls. And if God shall give success in it it will be the greatest satisfaction to me. There is now, and I hope will be, work enough for two; I hope therefore Mr. Woodbridge will be maintain'd there with me.

"I am sensible that one hundred pounds will but just pay the necessary charges of living; for the necessaries of life are and must be, dear in this remote part of the country. But I make myself easy in the matter, assuring myself that (if there be any money) the Gentlemen betruſted with the Affair will do what is reaſonable. Money alone is no temptation to me, at all, to devote myſelf to ſuch a life; yet I think it but reaſonable to expect to be ſupported ſo as to have no other care than the buſineſs I ſhall go upon.

"Some of the Indians I perceive have a mind to be baptiz'd, Kunkapot eſpecially, who appears to me well qualify'd for it. I have therefore tho't it would be convenient I ſhould be ordain'd ſpeedily; at leaſt as ſoon as I am diſmiſs'd from the concerns of the College. I would gladly be inform'd whether it will be expected I ſhould come to Boſton for that purpoſe. To be ordain'd here will be more convenient for me, and leſs expenſive. The lads I brought down lived here with me laſt winter, upon my credit. The charge has amounted to ſomething conſiderable, too much for me, under my preſent circumſtances, to bear alone; tho', were I able, I ſhould gladly beſtow my money that way. If you will pleaſe to return a line in answer to theſe, I ſhall eſteem it a great honour and favour done to

"Reverend Sir,

"Your moſt humble and obedient ſervant,

JOHN SERGEANT."

Mr. Sergeant's ſelf-denying, generous and pious behaviour, diſcover'd in devoting himſelf to the ſervice of the ſouls of the poor Heathen, as above, rais'd him very high in the eſteem of many. Nor do I think that the Rev. Dr. Colman exceeded due bounds when he expreſs'd it in the following letter and encouraged and ſtrengthen'd Mr. Sergeant in his laudable undertaking:

BOSTON, June 18th, 1735.

"*Reverend and Dear Sir:*

"Your letter of the 3rd inſtant is very welcome and obliging to me.

"I ſhall think myſelf happy and honoured in your acquaintance. Our eſteem of Mr. Sergeant is not to be expreſs'd, who can chearfully deny himſelf for the ſervice of Chriſt and the Souls that may look mean among men, but are precious in the ſight of God and therefore in yours. As God has wonderfully ſpirited you, ſo he owns and I truſt will own you more and more. I ſhall eſteem it our duty here to do all we can to aſſiſt you. You

are high in the heart of Governor Belcher and all the Commissioners. I have read your letter to him, but our publick affairs will not allow us a meeting presently; I cannot therefore answer to the main points of your letter now; but as to your asking Ordination, I judge, with his Excellency, that it will be fit you should speedily ask and receive it, and have it where you are. It will be upon all accounts most proper and convenient. And may you have a more abundant entrance given you among the Heathen when you return to them. I have taken leave this morning, to insert in a letter to a gentleman in London a copy of yours to me. The Gentleman, three years ago, press'd me to receive from his hand a security of Twenty Pounds sterling per annum, forever, for a fourth Missionary to the Indians on our borders. But as I could not see that the other three were like to benefit the papisted Indians, I refus'd him, giving him my reasons. But I have now shewn him an open and effectual door at Housatunnuk, and said all I can to fix him, and his noble charity, on the Mission thither. If the Gentleman (who will not yet let me name him) come into my proposal it will please me much and make our way easier. But if this fail I trust we shall be able to support the good work of God, begun by you. I would strengthen your heart and hand, and shall be for doing my utmost, and so will the Governor and all the Gentlemen here, I am confident. God give you many Seals of your Ministry, and make you a spiritual father to a whole tribe of souls; and may a Nation be born in a day. Accept of the sincere and fervent love of

“Sir, your Brother and Servant,

BENJAMIN COLMAN.”

July the 1st, 1735. Mr. Sergeant (having dismiss'd his class at College) left New Haven, intending to spend the rest of the summer, and indeed of his life, with the Indians at Housatunnuk, where he arriv'd on the 5th, and the next Sabbath preach'd to the English, there being no Interpreter present. And he, with Mr. Woodbridge, went on to keep the school as before—one above, the other below, changing place every week.

“Lord's Day, July 13th. Preach'd to the Indians, few in number. No man present except Kunkapot, who was very much affected, weeping almost all the time. The men were gone into New York Government, to reap for the Dutch people there.”

The Indians' reaping for the Dutch does not turn to their advantage (tho' it might if they had prudence to save their wages),

but proves a snare to them; for (as Mr. Sergeant observes in his *Journal*) when the harvest is over the Indians at Hudson's River drink up all their wages. But he had the pleasure to hear that Wnampee, one of his hearers on this occasion, overcame the temptation and told the Indians at Hudson's River plainly, that he designed to go to Heaven, and therefore must leave off such wickedness. But some of them, to his great grief, did not come off so well. Neither is it to be wondered at, that men who for a long course of years have addicted themselves to excess, should be overcome when such temptations are laid before them by their brethren, and urg'd on by others for the sake of gain.

The pains some of the Housatunnuk Indians have taken to cure themselves of this ill habit, has been very great. And some instances there have been of persons among them who, when strong drink has been offer'd them, have refus'd to taste of it, giving this as a reason, *viz*: that if they once taste it they are in the utmost danger of exceeding the bounds of temperance.

August the 13th. Mr. Sergeant receiv'd a letter from the honourable Adam Winthrop, Esq., informing him that at a meeting of the Commissioners it was propos'd and agreed to, that he should be ordain'd at Deerfield, when his Excellency Governor Belcher should come thither upon a treaty with the Indians of several tribes, who were to meet him at that place. The Indians of Housatunnuk, being sent for by the Governor, set out for Deerfield about the 18th of August; but Mr. Sergeant was then in doubt whether he should be able to go, as he was taken a few days before with the intermitting fever, the common distemper of all new-comers to Housatunnuk. But on the 26th of the month he was so far recover'd of his illness that he set out for Deerfield and was there ordained on the Sabbath following.

The account I find of Mr. Sergeant's ordination, in his own *Journal*, is only this:

Lord's Day, August 31st, 1735. I was ordained at Deerfield.



I shall therefore give the reader an account of that Solemnity, as I find it in the preface of the Rev. Mr. Appleton's sermon preached on that occasion, and in what is annex'd at the end of said sermon:

"And as it was thought highly proper, according to Mr. Sergeant's proposal, that he should be ordained, so his Excellency the Governor, who is at the head of the Commissioners, was pleas'd so to order the matter as to have a very favourable opportunity for it; for his Excellency having propos'd a treaty with some of the Indian tribes, at Deerfield, gave orders to the Indians at Housatunnuk to meet him there. Accordingly the Governor, attended with a large committee of his Majesty's Council and House of Representatives and many other gentlemen, was at Deerfield on August 25th. And that week being taken up in the treaty with the Indians, in ratifying the peace and friendship between us and them, and in giving and receiving the usual pledges of it, and Mr. Sergeant not coming to Town till Friday evening, it was judg'd proper to have the Ordination on the Lord's Day; which was accordingly carried on in the forenoon of the said day, by the Rev. Mr. Williams of Hatfield, and other Ministers then present, at the desire and in the presence of his Excellency and the honourable gentlemen of the General Court, and those that attended him thither, together with the Assembly of Christians usually meeting in that place and many of the Indians, who were grave spectators of the Solemnity, and the Housatunnuk Indians, who sat by themselves and attended throughout the whole service with great seriousness and were much pleas'd to see one they had such a love for so solemnly separated to the service of their souls."

As an introduction to the ordination the Rev. Mr. William Williams of Hatfield made a speech to his Excellency the Governor, in which he took notice of God's inclining the hearts of some generous persons in Great Britain, by their charitable donations, to seek the salvation of the benighted heathen, and of its being submitted to the direction of an honourable corporation there; and that by them a number of honourable and reverend Commissioners (of which his Excellency is at the head) were here appointed for the same end; and of their having found a suitable person for the instruction of the Indians, of which those at Housatunnuk were desirous. And humbly ask'd, if it were his Excellency's pleasure that the pastors then conven'd should proceed to set him apart for that work.

To which his Excellency manifested his approbation. Then he observ'd to Mr. Sergeant that he now understood his Excellency, in the name of the Commissioners, desir'd him to take upon him the Ministry and Service of a Missionary to the Housatunnuk Indians, and ask'd him if he were willing to devote himself to that Work:

To which Mr. Sergeant gave his consent.

The Ordination was then proceeded in; and after the fellowship of Elders was given, the Rev. Mr. Stephen Williams of Springfield, by an interpreter, ask'd the Indians if they were willing to receive Mr. Sergeant, thus solemnly set apart to the work, as their teacher.

To which they manifested their willingness by rising up.

After the short account Mr. Sergeant gave of his ordination as above, he in his *Journal* adds:

"The Affair of the treaty being made publick I need say nothing of it. Only I would take notice that his Excellency's treatment of our Indians was exceeding grateful to them, and they have conceiv'd the highest opinion of the Governor."

Here Mr. Sergeant takes occasion (from a quarrel that arose between an Indian and his wife, by which they were upon the very point of parting, tho' afterwards the difference was accommodated and they liv'd very happily together) to give some account of the ill custom among the Indians of parting after they are married:

"The parting of man and wife (saith he) is a very common thing among them. Indeed it us'd rarely to happen that a married couple live together till they are old. And as they use but little ceremony in the business of marriage, so they make a less thing of parting. In such a case 'tis their law that the children and all the household stuff belong to the woman; and indeed everything else but the *Gun*, for that is the man's livelihood. The man, according to their custom, has no right to the children, any more than any other person whatever."

Then he goes on:

"After the treaty was over I went to New Haven, and after I had paid a visit to friends in New Jersey (his native place) I return'd again to Housatunnuk and brought back the Captain's son from New Haven (for he had been there all Summer) who had by this time learnt to speak and read English very well. When I return'd, Mr. Woodbridge was not here, for being taken sick about the time I was, when he had a little recovered he went down to Springfield for the confirmation of his health; but was detained there by sickness until some time in November. In the meantime I kept the School. Lord's Day, October 26th, I preach'd as usual. The Indians shew'd great satisfaction to see me, their Minister, again. I propos'd baptism to the Captain and his family, who show'd himself very desirous of it. I went up to his house in the week time, to discourse with him and prepare him for it. He is a very modest but intelligent man, of great integrity and a blameless conversation; and from the very first of my reaching there seem'd to have a serious and religious turn of mind.

"His wife also is a very sober, good sort of a woman. He and his wife gave great attention to what I said. Accordingly, Lord's Day, November 2d, I baptized Kunkapot by the name of *John*, his wife *Mary*, and eldest daughter. The rest of the children were not present, by reason of the badness of the weather. The candidates shew'd a serious sense of what they were about. It was done in the presence of a considerable number, both of Christians and Heathen.

"November 7th. I married Ebenezer and Sarah, lawful publishment having first been made; for he said he, being a Christian, chose to be married after the English manner, which he prefer'd to their own.

"November 9th. I baptiz'd the rest of the Captain's family as also Ebenezer's son; in all, five. And now the Lieutenant and his wife propos'd themselves to baptism, the next Lord's Day. I desir'd them to come in the evening to my Lodgings, and they came with Ebenezer, their interpreter. I discoursed very largely, and as particularly as I tho't proper, upon all the more important and fundamental points of Belief and Practice in the Christian religion; to which they seriously attended, and were apparently much affected. This conversation the Lieutenant has often spoken of since, as what afforded him more knowledge than he had ever gain'd by all his former instruction; and from this time he seems to have had a new heart given him.

"Lord's Day, November 16th. I baptiz'd the Lieutenant by the name of *Aaron*, his wife *Hannah*, and the rest of his family; as also the Lieu-

tenant's wife's sister, and Ebenezer's wife—in all eleven persons. The Lieutenant is a clear-headed, smart man, of a deep reach, and pleasant humour, and is one of the best speakers we hear; is free in conversation and talks excellently well. He has entirely left off drinking to excess, and declaims against it; shews great compassion towards the rest of the Indians and seems heartily to lament their miserable condition; wishes they were come to the Gospel; is himself thoro'ly convinced of the truth; and his knowledge does not puff him up. And tho' he is reckon'd somewhat haughty, yet always shews himself modest and teachable enough.

"The Indians in general now seem'd more engaged in religion than ever before. I was willing to improve their present temper, and therefore tarried with them in the evening (for they had now again mov'd with their families to the School-house, where they liv'd all winter) and discours'd with them several hours, till indeed I was afraid I should tire their patience. However when I told them I was unwilling to be tedious to them, they answer'd they were glad to hear, and should never be tir'd with hearing those things. I endeavour'd to give them a short view of the whole scheme of Christianity. They gave good attention and appear'd well pleased. (And this I practis'd for several Lord's Day evenings following.) And when I had done, Wnampee and his wife propos'd themselves to baptism the next Lord's Day. 23d. I baptiz'd Wnampee, his wife and family, the Lieutenant's brother Tohtohkukhoonaut, with some others—in all eleven souls. Saturday of this week came a Susquehannah Indian who indeed is a remarkable fellow; he continu'd with us about a month, attended constantly upon preaching, gave great attention and behav'd himself very well while he was here.

"Lord's Day, November 30th. In the evening I stay'd at the School-house to discourse with the Indians. Unnaquaunut, the Susquehannah Indian, was present. I therefore shap'd my discourse in some measure for his instruction, endeavouring to shew the advantage and necessity of Revelation, and the peculiar excellencies of the Christian religion. This stranger mightily approv'd of what I said. He was formerly very vicious, tho' a man of good sense, and spake a little Dutch. The Indians generally own the difference between moral good and evil, as also a future state of rewards and punishments. And I suppose he, being a man of some curiosity and understanding a little Dutch, might have some better notions of these things than the Indians commonly have, and perhaps had some knowledge of the peculiar doctrines of the Christian religion. He had certainly experienc'd



something more than ordinary, whereby he had been chang'd from a very vicious, drunken fellow to a sober man. He told me sundry things that had befallen him. He is certainly a very different man from what he us'd to be. He is now a very temperate, rational, thinking man, and has not only left off drinking to excess, but drinks no strong drink at all.

"Lord's Day, December 7th. I baptiz'd nine more persons. About this time the Indians agreed to have no trading in rum; which they remain'd by.<sup>1</sup>

"Lord's Day, 14th. I baptiz'd Nawnawnekenuk, a principal man, of a very good temper and sense, honest, faithful and obliging.

"Lord's Day, 21st. There being no interpreter, I preach'd to the English only. About this time some of our Indians came to me and desir'd my opinion about a certain custom they have and call Keutikaw, or a dance. I ask'd them if there were any religion in it; they answer'd no, but that it was only a civil custom of their nation: however, if I disapprov'd of it they would omit it. I told them if there was nothing more in the matter I saw no harm in it, and I should be glad of an opportunity to see some of their people here; but was afraid they would fall to drinking, and instead of doing honour to the religion they were now professors of (which was their duty); they would scandalise it before strangers. They promised me there should be no drinking—that they would carefully abstain from it themselves, and when they sent to invite some of their friends to the Keutikaw, should forbid their bringing any Rum. They us'd always upon such occasions to have plenty of strong drink, and always made a drunken frolick of it in the end.

"Lord's Day, January 18th. I preach'd at the Lieutenant's house to an auditory of eighty or ninety, about one-half being strangers. I preach'd a discourse suitable for the occasion, and afterwards sat and discours'd with them for a considerable time. They heard with attention, and I have reason to think with approbation, for I heard some of the elderly persons express'd themselves much in favour of the Christian religion; wish'd our Indians might go on and prosper; and some said they would come and live here; and two families did stay and are here now. Unnagaunut also left two sons here in the School, both likely young fellows. One, especially, is extraordinary and learns at a prodigious rate, so that we had now ten souls added to our number. The number of scholars is upwards of forty, besides some elderly persons who have made attempts to learn to read.

"The Keutikaw is a Dance which finishes the mourning for the dead, and

<sup>1</sup> I. e. Adhered to.

is celebrated about twelve months after the decease, when the guests invited make presents to the relatives of the deceas'd, to make up their loss and to end their mourning. The manner of doing it is this: the presents prepar'd are deliver'd to a Speaker appointed for the purpose; who laying them upon the shoulders of some elderly persons, makes a speech shewing the design of their present meeting, and of the presents prepar'd. Then he takes them and distributes them to the mourners, adding some words of consolation and desiring them to forget their sorrow, and accept of the presents to make up their loss. After this they eat together and make merry.

"Our Indians kept to their resolution about drinking, much beyond my expectation; for they always us'd to get drunk upon such occasions, but we had now but very little drinking. The behaviour of our Indians was much taken notice of by the strangers, there being a very observable reformation in their manners. The Lieutenant signaliz'd himself not only by abstaining from excess himself, but by exhorting others to use with moderation what strong drink they were allow'd. Unnaqaunut was also here and was very serviceable in keeping good order."

By what I have here transcrib'd from Mr. Sergeant's *Journal*, the reader will be sensible that the Indians had a great respect for him, and were disposed to ask, and submit to, his advice in everything, their own ancient customs not excepted; that Mr. Sergeant was very industrious and faithful in promoting their temporal and eternal good; and that the blessing of God abundantly succeeded his endeavours.

It was then but little more than a year since those Indians were in the depth of heathenish ignorance and darkness, wholly unacquainted with the first principles of Christianity, and without God in the world. But in that short space many of them had gain'd such degrees of knowledge in the principles of religion, that they were become in Mr. Sergeant's opinion (who was a good judge) fit subjects of baptism. And they, with their children, to the number of forty, were baptiz'd by him in little more than two months after his ordination. The number of their inhabitants and of their scholars in the school was also increas'd.

These things greatly refresh'd Mr. Sergeant's spirits, and were no small encouragement to him in his difficult work. They were also matter of admiration to others, and the occasion of many thanksgivings to God, whose power and grace were manifest in turning those poor people from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God.

And as many rejoic'd to see Mr. Sergeant chearfully devote himself to the service of Christ in this self-denying work, and to hear of the glorious success he was favour'd with in it, so they said many kind and endearing things to him by their letters. And the reader will not, I trust, be displeas'd if I transcribe some passages out of them:

The Rev. Dr. Colman, in a letter November 18, 1735, says:

*"Reverend and Dear Sir:*

It is not easy to tell you how much we have rejoic'd here in your ordination to the good and great work into which you have entered. May the consolations of God refresh and enlarge your soul from time to time, in all your self-denials for the sake of his Name, and of the dear souls for whom you are labouring. I have read with great pleasure your first discourse to those poor Natives, and have ventur'd a copy of it to the Earl of Egmont<sup>1</sup> and the associates of the late eminent Dr. Bray<sup>2</sup> at London. I have observ'd to his Lordship that yours is a proper original; and how justly adapted to the genius and capacity of the savages! May God make you a father to them, to beget them to Christ by the Gospel. I gave some account to the excellent Dr. Watts, of London,<sup>3</sup> of the strange disposition of the Housatunnuk tribe to receive the Gospel, and of the good spirit on you to leave the College and go among them. He answers me that he is always looking out to any quarter of the world for such Appearances. May Jesus (says he), the Head of the Church and of nations, attend your young Missionary with extraordinary assistance and success. Methinks (added he) I love him upon your report, for his courage and zeal.

<sup>1</sup> Egremont. The town of Egremont, Mass., is named for him.

<sup>2</sup> This was doubtless the celebrated Thomas Bray (1656-1730), the originator of parish libraries in England and America and the founder (1698) of the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge.

<sup>3</sup> Isaac Watts, the father of English hymnody.

"Let your heart, dear sir, be encourag'd, and your hands strengthen'd, by the love and prayers of men of God at such a distance from you. They hear of you and rejoice and bless you, of whom you neither hear nor think. I have also lately receiv'd a letter and a gift, from the honourable Samuel Holden of London. I'll give you a hint of both. In his letter he says to me, 'I bless God I have no views in life but to honour God, by improving all my circumstances to promote his interest in the world, and the good of my fellow-creatures. Nor do I know any circumstance here below to invite my stay. I've lived long enough to see all emptiness and vanity,' etc. This most pious man has remitted me a considerable Gift, part of which I have already receiv'd. He desires me to dispose of it in such a manner as may be most for the honour of God, in promoting the Knowledge and practice of religion, or in relief of the necessitous members of Jesus Christ. If Mr. Sergeant and Mr. Woodbridge, your brother and companion in the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ, have need of five pounds each of this donation, please to give your order how I shall pay or remit it to you. I do (with great pleasure and thankfulness to God) make the offer of it. Pray for Mr. Holden and his, for me also and mine. Mercy, Grace and Peace be multiply'd to you and to the families you serve. May they be bless'd in Him, the glorious Seed in whom the families of the Earth are blessed. Amen," etc.

His Excellency, Governor Belcher, in a letter of January 20, 1735, expresses himself in a most kind and friendly manner—and toward the close of his letter says to him: "Set before you the example of the great Apostle of the Gentiles, for your imitation, that you may approve yourself a chosen vessel unto Christ, to bear his Name to those that are perishing for lack of vision. And may you, Sir, be honour'd of God, by being made an instrument of taking the seals from their eyes. May you be wise to win their souls, and be able to say to them, In Christ Jesus have I begotten you through the Gospel. For these things will I bow my knees and lift up my heart to him with whom is the residue of the Spirit," etc.

The Rev. Mr. Appleton<sup>1</sup> of Cambridge also, in a letter of February 25, uses these expressions:

"As it was with great pleasure that I saw you so freely surrender up yourself to the service of Jesus Christ, and of the souls of the poor Indians, so I take this opportunity to let you know how much I rejoice to hear

<sup>1</sup> Nathaniel Appleton (1693-1784) who succeeded William Brattle in 1717 as pastor of the church of Cambridge. He was a member of the Harvard Corporation from 1717 to 1779.



of the wonderful success of your labours among them. This is one of the best tokens you can have that God is with you of a truth; for what can be a surer mark of the promised presence of Christ, than his spiriting you to preach, and opening their hearts to receive? Therefore you must not complain of solitude, when you hear Christ saying so plainly to you, *Lo I am with you*. Give my hearty respects to Mr. Woodbridge. I heartily commend you both to the grace of God, earnestly praying that the great Lord of the Harvest, who has sent you forth, would continue to strengthen your hands and encourage your heart by increasing the fruit of your labours; and that these poor, neglected, perishing people may be your joy for the present, and your crown in the day of Christ's appearing," etc.

Mr. Sergeant, by reason of hurry in business, kept copies of but very few of the letters he wrote. I am not therefore able to insert his answer, either to his Excellency or to the Rev. Mr. Appleton; but having obtain'd the originals written to the Rev. Dr. Colman, shall gratify the reader with Mr. Sergeant's answer to the foregoing letter from the Doctor:

*"Reverend Sir:*

Your favour of the 18th of November I receiv'd a few days ago, which still adds to the obligation to gratitude I was laid under by your former, which was accompany'd with a very acceptable present, for which I now return you my most hearty thanks. I doubt not but God, in his infinite mercy, hears the prayers of good men, daily put up to him, for success in the cause of Christ, in which I have the honour to be engag'd. Next to the blessing of God on my endeavours, the prayers and good wishes of men of God yield me the greatest satisfaction. In their favour I seem to enjoy the pleasure of society, in the deepest solitude. I wish I were worthy of the love of so excellent a man as Dr. Watts, whom all love and admire. And if I may be tho't worthy in any measure, to deserve the good opinion of my fellow men, it is not a little owing to the Doctor's ingenious writings, which have the force to charm the mind to the love of virtue and piety, and to infuse his own spirit into his readers. My first discourse to them (the Indians) I had no thought of ever being read by any but myself, but had I attempted its amendment perhaps I should have made it worse.

"God has been pleas'd to crown our labours with surprizing and unex-

pected success. I have baptiz'd almost forty persons,<sup>1</sup> infants and adult. I hope the adult have a pretty good understanding of the main and fundamental doctrines of the holy religion into which they have been baptiz'd. And I always endeavoured to possess their minds with the most serious sense of what they were about when they enter'd themselves the disciples of Christ. Their whole hearts seem'd to be engaged in the matter, and I have reason to think that the imperfection of their knowledge is made up by their zeal and integrity. Those who have been baptiz'd have behav'd very well, tho' they have several times been tempted to exceed the rules of temperance by offers of strong drink, which us'd to be their beloved Destruction. They seem'd to be surpriz'd with the change they find in themselves; expressing the difference between their former state and the present by infancy and manhood, dreaming and being awake, darkness and light, and the like metaphors. I pray God the Day Star that seems to be arisen in their hearts may shine more and more to the perfect day.

"I thank you for your kind offer of the donation from that pious and generous gentleman you mention. I thank God I do not want myself, but two Indian lads live with me, and about three pounds I design to spend upon these, or some others that may assist me in learning the language; which I cannot well afford without the assistance of charity. If, therefore, you will be pleas'd to remit to me by the bearer, what you offer'd, I shall accept it with great thankfulness; and I think it would be laid out very profitably in the way I have mentioned. Pray for me, for our new proselytes, and for our whole tribe. May the blessing of the charitable man descend upon you and yours, which is the hearty prayer of," etc.

The Rev. Dr. Colman not only approv'd of the method in which Mr. Sergeant propos'd to spend the money offer'd him, but was so well pleas'd with it that he doubled the sum; as appears by a passage in the Doctor's answer of February 6th, 1735-6:

"Mr. Matthew Noble brings me to-day your welcome letter of December 26th, and has receiv'd ten pounds for yourself, and five for Mr. Woodbridge. I have doubled the sum to you, upon reading your letter, for the assisting you the more in supporting the two Indian boys."

By a passage in Mr. Sergeant's *Journal* it seems as if even the River Indians had not wholly escap'd being tamper'd with by the Romish clergy —

<sup>1</sup> He might have said quite, as appears by the following account.

"January 26th. The Lieutenant ask'd me what I thought of the celibacy of the Romish clergy, and of their severe methods of doing penance. I was a little surpriz'd to hear him ask such a question, for I did not suppose our Indians knew anything of the matter. However, I readily told him that those things were vain inventions of men, and unprofitable services; that I did not judge any man, but I was sure nobody was under obligation to do them; that our business was to mortify our lusts and passions and to regulate our lives by the reveal'd Will of God, and not to go beyond *that*."

The Indians' living in two places, remote from each other, put them to the trouble of removing from their proper habitations in the winter season, and laid them under disadvantages as to attending upon the publick worship, and the School, in the Summer. There was therefore from the beginning a design to accommodate them with land, that they might all settle in one place, and that there might be accommodations also for others of the tribe who might be dispos'd to come and settle with them. The honourable John Stoddard, Esq., in a letter wrote to be communicated to the Indians at their general meeting at Housatunnuk in January, 1734-5, mentioned it as follows:

"There is a Projection (says he) to get the most of the great meadow above the mountain of Housatunnuk for the Indians, so that they may live together and be able, with convenience, to attend the publick worship and have a school at their doors; provided the Government can agree with the English, who have lands there, and can suit them with lands elsewhere. These things are great tokens of kindness towards the Indians, and they should be very careful how they put a slight upon them."

At the treaty at Deerfield the same thing was propos'd to them by Governor Belcher: "I have been inform'd" (says his Excellency) "that you live remote from one another, and that you are not accommodated with lands sufficient to support your families. This matter I shall lay before the great council of this Government, and recommend to them the giving you lands for your more convenient and compact settlement, and what may be enough for your living comfortably upon."

Accordingly, the Governor laid this matter before the General Assembly at their Fall session, and gives Mr. Sergeant the following account of it, in a letter of January 20th, 1735-6:

"I laid before them (the General Court) what I had promised to your little flock at the interview with them at Deerfield; and Colonel Stoddard, Major Pumroy<sup>1</sup> and Mr. Justice Ingersoll<sup>2</sup> are appointed by the General Court to weigh and consider all things and circumstances, so as to accommodate my children at Housatunnuk with land in the best manner."

His Excellency adds:

"I agree with you that some English families (if such can be found as you mention) be interspers'd and settled among the Indians; for to *civilize* will be the readiest way to *Christianize* them."

The Indians of Housatunnuk were inform'd of the steps that were taken by the English, and of the Committee chosen for the above-mentioned end; but had a great jealousy upon their minds, that the English had some ill design upon them; and had several consultations among themselves, what answer they should make to them when they came up. Why they were so cautious the reader may learn from Mr. Sergeant's *Journal*.

"It may be (says he) perhaps be wonder'd that there should be any difficulty among the Indians in this affair. But it is the manner of the nation to be slow in their debates, cautious in their determinations, and jealous of their interest. And the enemies of the Gospel (for we have a great many, not only among the Indians in other places, but also among pretended Christians, whose godliness is their Gain) had been very industrious to throw stumbling-blocks in their way, and to prevent their accepting the proposal of settling together. For there have not been wanting those, and there are some yet, that tell them our design in this affair is only to get the greater advantage of them, and bring them more into our power that we may enslave them and their children."

<sup>1</sup> Seth Pomeroy, born in Northampton, May 20, 1706, died at Peekskill, N. Y. (where is a monument to his memory). February 19, 1777. He was major in the Massachusetts troops at Louisburg, and his experience at Bunker Hill is familiar history.

<sup>2</sup> This was Captain David Ingersoll, one of the Selectmen of the town of Sheffield.



But these jealousies were in some good measure remov'd by the pains Mr. Sergeant took to satisfy them of the kind and good intention of the English towards them, and by the faithfulness both of the Committee and Government in that affair.

"February 10th (says Mr. Sergeant) Major Pumroy and Mr. Ingersole, two of the gentlemen appointed by the Government to weigh and consider the matter of procuring for the Indians some land, came up here upon that business. The next day the Indians, being sent for, came to meet the Committee. And first, the Major read the vote of the Assembly by which the three forementioned gentlemen were appointed a Committee for this affair, and then made a speech to them to the following purport:

*"Friends and Brethren:*

"The Governor and General Court appointed us to come up to treat with you, and to endeavour to settle you together upon some good interval<sup>1</sup> land, that you may better profit by your Minister and Schoolmaster; and for this end we are come. Colonel Stoddard's mother being an aged woman, and sick, prevented his coming, and will, we hope, be his excuse to you; but we are come to promote your civil and religious interest. We can assure you of the friendship and good will of this Government. Therefore tell us what will suit, that we may inform the General Court, who will gladly do you good.

"Then the Committee ask'd whether they had a mind to live together. They answer'd, Yes, and should be very thankful if they might be accommodated for that purpose; and said they were all agreed. Then they were ask'd whether the interval<sup>1</sup> land above that mountain (which the Indians call Wnuhktukook) would suit them—they said, very well. And whether they were willing to part with their reserv'd land below at Scatekook, for an equivalent above—they answer'd yes. Whether they were willing a lot should be there reserv'd for the Minister and Schoolmaster—they said yes, by all means. Then they were dismiss'd till the 18th of the month."

It must be here observ'd that the lands at Wnahktukook (*alias* the Great Meadow) above the mountain were comprehended in the north part of a township, which was some time ago purchas'd of the Indians, and by the General Assembly granted to a number of

<sup>1</sup> Intervale.

proprietors, except a small part which Captain Kunkapot and some other Indians there reserv'd for their own use, and now live upon. What the General Assembly design'd was, to agree with those proprietors who had land above the mountain to give up their right, and to take land in other places as an equivalent for it; and to grant the Indians a township six miles square, comprising the Great Meadow in it; that being the most suitable spot for the Indians of any that could be had—for they make little or no use of any but interval land.

The business therefore of the Committee, in the next place, was with those English and Dutch people who held the land above the mountain—with whom, when they came to discourse, they found little or no difficulty, for they were content with the proposals made to them of equivalent lands in other places. But there were two or three Dutchmen who were settled above the mountain and had lands in the Great Meadow, who were more difficult. To those the Committee made some very fair proposals, which they took into consideration.

The Committee therefore, upon meeting the Indians on the 18th, inform'd them that they had confer'd with the proprietors of the land above the mountain, and that there was a prospect of obtaining those lands for the Indians, according to their desire; especially seeing the Governor and General Court were so very desirous of promoting religion among them; that it was not now in their power to settle them together, but they must make report of what they had done to the General Assembly—who if they approv'd of it would send another Committee to accomplish the Affair. And then they desir'd to know whether the Indians had anything further to say to them.

The Indians return'd them their hearty thanks for the pains they had taken and for the trouble they had been at, in prosecuting the affair, and added that they had nothing further to say, but only that they desir'd to be settled together by planting time.

Upon the report of the Committee I suppose it was, the General Court granted to the Indians a township six miles square above the mountain, comprizing in it Wnahktukook, or the Great Meadow. And the same gentlemen were appointed a Committee to lay out the land, and to treat further with those who were proprietors of land within the limits of the township, to give them an equivalent, to proportion the meadow lands to the Indians, and to do all that was needful that the Indians might be put into the quiet possession of it. By the grant of the General Assembly, Mr. Sergeant, their Minister, and Mr. Woodbridge, their Schoolmaster, were made proprietors each of a sixtieth part of the township; and four English families besides were to be accommodated with such a part as the Committee should see fit. It was upon Mr. Sergeant's desire that those families were admitted. The ends he had in view were not only that he and Mr. Woodbridge might have the comfort of their neighbourhood and society, but especially to civilize and Anglicize the Indians, and to be a help to them in their secular affairs. Families well adapted to answer those ends were to be chosen, and by Col. Stoddard's approbation (who was a good judge) they were to be admitted.

April 20th. These gentlemen, the honourable John Stoddard, Ebenezer Pumroy and Thomas Ingersole, Esquires, went to Housatunnuk upon the business assign'd them by the Court. When they met the Indians they found some jealousies yet remaining upon their minds, which it was needful for them in the first place to remove. Of this matter Mr. Sergeant, in his *Journal*, gives the following account:

"The Indians met the Committee, who discours'd with them, informing them of the intention of the Government and the design of their coming up; reminding them of what was agreed upon in the winter, telling them how far they had proceeded already; for they had, before they came up, agreed with all the proprietors in those parts from whence they came, and had got twelve or fourteen rights to dispose of to them. After this Lieutenant Um-pachenee spake to the following purpose:

'That he was very sensible of the unhappy circumstances of his former life, and of the miserable state of his nation, who, being brought up in the greatest ignorance and vice, were objects of pity; and that he was also sensible of their great obligations to the English for the notice that had been taken of them; and very thankful for their care of them, in providing for their instruction in the knowledge of the Gospel, and taking care to have their children taught to read, and for their being brought up in the Christian religion; and said that for his part he was so fully sensible of these things that the consideration of them had sometimes almost drawn tears from his eyes; and that, as for himself he thought his eyes were now open'd, and was well satisfied of the truth of the Christian religion so far as he understood it, tho' possibly he might be mistaken, and was only sorry he'd had so little opportunity to be instructed; wish'd it had been his happiness to have been brought up in the Christian religion, as he hop'd it would be [that] of his children; for he wish'd the same care that had been taken might be contin'ud—yea, 'twas his desire that their whole tribe might be brought into the same way they were in. However, there were two or three things which appear'd dark in his eyes. He wonder'd they had been neglected so long, and desir'd to know the true spring of the great favour so suddenly shown them. If it was from love and good will towards them, he for his part accepted it with all thankfulness; but possibly there might be some secret spring and moving cause he was not acquainted with, that might lessen their obligations to gratitude. And what still more stumbl'd him was that Major Pumroy, when he was here last Winter, ask'd them several questions about the proprietors of several tracts of land, and so insisted upon it to know who they were and how they came by their Titles, that he was ready to conceive the Major suspected they had no title at all to the lands they challenged. If any gentleman question'd them in this point they were not able, without much trouble and sending for friends and providing witnesses, to satisfy him. Or if anyone should insist upon anything more than the testimony of living witnesses, he confess'd they could prove no title at all. However, their titles were good, according to their law and custom in such cases.

"And another thing he could not but wonder at was, that if the Christian religion was so true and good as he esteem'd it to be, how there should be so many professors of it that liv'd such vicious lives, and so contrary to what he was told were the rules of it.'

"This is the substance of what he said, which he spake with the greatest



earnestness. Col. Stoddard answer'd him; informing him what was the pre-tence of the first English settlers of America, with respect to the propagation of the Gospel among the natives of the country, and what is contain'd in the Charter of this Government respecting that matter, and told him what had been done formerly to Christianize the Indians, particularly by the famous Mr. Eliot, and what success had attended those endeavours, and what is now doing in diverse parts of the Province. That the Government had always been ready to promote the Gospel's propagation among them; that many attempts had been made, with but too little success; but as soon as ever it was known that the Indians at Housatunnuk had a favourable opinion of the Christian religion care was taken to have them instructed. It was their good, and that only, that was sought after, and, whatever their enemies might insinuate to the contrary, this was the spring of what was now doing for them. As for the difficulty which arose from what Major Pumroy had said, he answered for himself that it was not because he in the least doubted of their titles to their lands (which he look'd upon as good) that he enquir'd who own'd this and that Tract, and how they came by their titles, but that it was only to gratify his own curiosity to know their laws and customs. To the third difficulty the Colonel answer'd that it was indeed a shameful thing, but sprung from the corruption of men's hearts, and not from any defect in the rules of living. Then the Lieutenant spake again, and said, 'Perhaps, because the land was in great measure given them, there might hereafter some contention arise between their children and ours; and that ours would look upon themselves to have a superiority over theirs because the land was given them. He desired therefore to know how their titles would be ascertain'd, and what security they could have that their children would be free.'

To this the Colonel answer'd that they would have their titles in the same manner that all the people of the Government had; that therefore they had no more reason to fear that advantage would be taken against them than anybody else; that the same laws which protected others in their properties would protect them. That there were laws made peculiarly in favour of the Indians, which they would have the benefit of; that what will be none can certainly tell, but from what has been we may reasonably hope that the same favour will be continu'd; but after all they would be entirely at their liberty, as much as they were then, either to go away or to tarry there, if they had a mind to.

"Then the Lieutenant express'd his satisfaction in what had been said, and added that for his part he was so abundantly satisfy'd of the truth and ex-

cellency of the Christian religion that he would chearfully die for it. And after they had discours'd awhile upon religion in general, they were dismiss'd; very much to the satisfaction of the Indians."

The Committee met with much difficulty from the men who were settled above the mountain, but at length found means by which they were made pretty easy. They therefore proceeded in their business, laid out the township, which now goes by the name of Stockbridge, and if I mistake not, proportion'd the meadow land which they had got for the Indians. But some yet remain'd in the hands of the proprietors, which afterwards the Indians were put in possession of, tho' it cost the Committee, and Mr. Sergeant too, a great deal of trouble before they could satisfy and remove the owners.

Captain Kunkapot had formerly given to Jehoiakim Van Valkenburgh, a Dutchman, his special friend, forty acres of land in this Great Meadow, and about two hundred and fifty of upland adjoining to it, which he now held; but a little after, being reduc'd, he was oblig'd to sell. Some gentlemen therefore bought him out, and gave the land to the Indians, an equivalent of the unappropriated lands being given them by the General Assembly, so that the whole Meadow was in a little time possesst by the Indians.

On Monday, the 26th of April, the Committee confer'd again with the Indians, and inform'd them what they had done respecting their township; [and] desir'd to know of them if they would have anything alter'd. The Indians replied that they were very well satisfied with what was done, and very thankful for it.

In the beginning of May the Indians all settled in their new town; were greatly pleas'd with it. Two new families were added to their number.

"They gave very much into Husbandry (says Mr. Sergeant), planted more this year than ever they did before, by three times at least. Mr. Woodbridge lodges at Captain Kunkapot's, has a very numerous school and a tedious.

task of it; lives a very lonesome life, is indeed indefatigable in his business, and nobody deserves more of the publick than he."

When the Committee, upon their first visitation of the Indians at Housatunnuk, had finish'd their business with them, the time for getting sugar was come; therefore (March the first) they all went into the woods with their families, upon that business, expecting to follow it about six weeks. They went in two companies, about half with the Captain above the Mountain, the rest with the Lieutenant below. Mr. Sergeant was loth they should be so long without instruction, and therefore concluded that he would go with one of the companies and Mr. Woodbridge with the other, and live with them during that season.<sup>1</sup>

After the Indians had been out two days, and prepar'd themselves houses, they sent in two young men, one to conduct Mr. Sergeant to the Captain's house and the other to conduct Mr. Woodbridge to the Lieutenant's.

After they had been out about three weeks Mr. Sergeant and Mr. Woodbridge chang'd their quarters; Mr. Sergeant went up to the Lieutenant's company and Mr. Woodbridge to the Captain's, endeavouring that the Indians might have equal advantage from their instructions.

During these six weeks Mr. Sergeant spent his time very agreeably among the Indians, being employ'd in the day time in teaching the children to read; and in the evening he taught the Indians to sing, in which they took great delight. He pray'd with them morning and evening, in their own language, and said grace before and after Meat, in the same. He also preach'd to them on the Sabbath by an interpreter, and pray'd in their own language; which he began to do on February 18th, and continu'd it ever after; for they being desirous that prayers might be made in their own language, Mr. Sergeant (by the assistance of interpreters) had compos'd prayers for such occasions, in the Indian language. The snow now

<sup>1</sup> See frontispiece.

was about a foot and a half deep in those woods, and the weather cold. A deerskin with the hair on, spread upon some spruce boughs, and a blanket spread upon that, was his bed; and three blankets spread over him was his covering; where he slept very well. And tho' their Diet was low, yet it was cleanly and well dress'd, by the Captain's and Lieutenant's wives. Their drink was water. He had a good appetite, eat heartily and was in very good health all the time he was in the wilderness with them.

"I was" (says Mr. Sergeant) "treated very well while I was with them, and learn'd more of their manners and language than ever I had before. They are altogether without compliments in their treatment one of another. Children shew no sort of deference to their parents, either in word or carriage, more than to anybody else. They are very modest and the women and children bashful. They are kind one to another, and make everybody welcome, in their way, that comes to their houses. When a stranger comes into one of their houses he does it as if it were his own, and without any compliments at all sits down with the rest; but says nothing. The house-keeper immediately offers him some victuals, which he receives as tho' he were at home; eats freely, and then begins to talk, to tell his business or relate a piece of news; but will enter, before he has eat, into no discourse. Sometimes, when friends meet, they say to one another, O brother, or Cousin, or use some such word expressing some relation. But they have terms expressive of more particular, and quite different relations, from any we use. Their children, born of the same parents, stand in three relations to one another; the eldest calling all the younger, whether brothers or sisters, Nheesumuk. The elder sisters are to the younger, whether brothers or sisters, Nmesuk. The younger children call the elder brothers Netokhaunut; and there are other like relative terms, to which there are none in our language synonomous. And indeed their language, so far as I perceive as yet, is extremely different from all the European languages that I have any acquaintance with, and seems, as far as I can judge, in the Genius, phraseology and pronunciation of the words (which abound with gutturals) to be most like the language of the East;<sup>1</sup> tho' I confess I am as yet a very incompetent judge. Their women have a custom which is, for aught I know, peculiar to the aboriginal Americans; for they tell me it is common to all North America at least, viz: their girls, at the first flux of their menses,

<sup>1</sup> Hebrew.



separate themselves from all society, live alone in the woods, some fourteen, some twenty and some forty days: must do no work at all, nor be seen by any man—for it is reckon'd ominous for a man to see them in their separation. They cut off their hair when they go out, and some of their women go out afterwards, at the return of their terms, and stay three or four days. What they mean by this custom, or whence they deriv'd it, I cannot tell."

About the time the Indians settled in their new town Mr. Sergeant went to Westfield, and was there detain'd by sickness, so that he was absent from them two Sabbaths. He took care to inform the Indians of his sickness, who express'd a great deal of concern for him; enquir'd by all opportunities after him, and said if he should die it would be a great loss to them; but if it should be so they hop'd God would provide them another Minister. At his return they shew'd great joy and satisfaction that he was recover'd and restor'd to them again.

May 23rd. He preach'd to them in their new settlement, but liv'd not among them as their Schoolmaster did, but kept still at his lodgings about five miles below.

June 12th. A messenger came from Hudson's River to call the Indians thither, to consider of a murder committed by one of their tribe. The Captain and Lieutenant went upon that occasion, and had opportunity, while they were gone, to see and converse with many of the principal Indians; spent almost all their time in discourse with them upon the subject of religion, and told Mr. Sergeant, when they return'd, that all they talked with had favourable thoughts of the Christian religion, own'd that they themselves were in a wrong way, and said they believ'd they were serving the devil; and not one objected anything against Christianity, but several said they would come with their families and be instructed.

On the 27th of June Mr. Sergeant baptiz'd a child; which being mention'd in his *Journal* he proceeds to say:

"And now the whole number that I have baptiz'd is fifty-two. The num-

ber of Indians now residing here is upward of ninety; and it is highly probable, if God affords us the blessing he has done, we shall have here, in a few years, some hundreds of Indians.

From the imperfect view of the matter one may have from this *Journal* it will, I believe, appear that the hand of God has been remarkably in the Affair. But I am not able, in writing, to communicate the same view of things that I have from observing the whole from step to step. And considering the gross darkness the Indians were brought up in, with the great opposition the Gospel has met with, not only from the heathen but from some also who have the name of Christians, I am surpriz'd at the progress it has so suddenly made among them. A very remarkable reformation appears more and more in their manners; their hearts seem really to be engag'd; and vice and drunkenness (the vice they are all addicted to) begins to be a great disgrace among them. I am not able to converse much with them in their own language, tho' I understand a great deal they say; and religion is the subject of frequent conversation among them. Our Dutch interpreter tells me he is surpriz'd to hear some of them talk so sensibly as they do about religion."

When Mr. Sergeant was at Westfield, in the beginning of May, he receiv'd a letter from Dr. Colman of April 21, giving him an account of a generous offer Mr. Isaac Hollis<sup>1</sup> of London had made him, of dieting, clothing, lodging and instructing twenty Indian boys at his own cost.

This is the gentleman to whom the Doctor wrote, recommending the Mission at Housatunnuk to his generosity; of which he inform'd Mr. Sergeant in his letter of June 18th, 1735, inserted on page 42; and in answer to the letter of the Doctor's, he makes this generous offer.

Dr. Colman, who was wise and prudent, thought it not best to draw upon Mr. Hollis until he should be well inform'd what the

<sup>1</sup> It is uncertain which member of the London family is meant. Thomas (1659-1731) was the first of the name to aid Harvard College. His brothers, John and Nathaniel, and Nathaniel's son Thomas (died 1735) were also of the college's benefactors as also was Thomas, son of the second Thomas (1720-1774); other members of the family were liberal givers to Harvard. Probably a brother of the second Thomas was Mr. Sergeant's helper.

charge of maintaining twenty scholars would amount to in one year; for he was apprehensive that it would rise higher than the donor expected, and therefore wrote to Mr. Williams of Springfield and to Mr. Sergeant, for their thoughts upon the matter, and also consulted Governor Belcher. And upon the best computation they could make concluded that the expence of one child, in a year, would arise to twenty-five pounds our currency, and the whole to five hundred pounds<sup>1</sup> per annum. Of this Dr. Colman inform'd Mr. Hollis, and it prov'd as the Doctor expected—it exceeded what Mr. Hollis tho't of. He therefore reduc'd the number of scholars to twelve, and propos'd to support that number from year to year.

About the same time the honourable Samuel Holden, Esq., of London, directed the Rev. Dr. Colman to bestow one hundred pounds of his money for the benefit of the Indians at Stockbridge; which Mr. Sergeant, with Dr. Colman's approbation, thought best to expend for the benefit of the females, seeing Mr. Hollis's donation was confin'd to the males.

Of these noble and generous instances of liberality Mr. Sergeant inform'd the Indians, who were much affected with them and very thankful to their pious benefactors. And as a grateful acknowledgement of the benefits they had receiv'd from the honourable Corporation at home, they wrote the following letter:

“Being very sensible of the former miserable circumstances both of ourselves and children, by reason of the ignorance and vice in which we were bro't up, we cannot but resent (*sic*) with the most hearty gratitude the care you have taken to instruct us in the doctrines of the Gospel, truths necessary for our present satisfaction and future happiness.

We bless God, the father of mercies and giver of all good things, that he has pitied us and put it into your hearts to use your endeavours to communicate to us that knowledge of Divine things which he has given to you. We also thank God that he hath given us favour in the eyes of this Government; especially in making provision for our living together, which is a very great conveniency for our own and our children's instruction in the prin-

<sup>1</sup> Massachusetts currency about one-fifth of sterling.

ciples of religion and other useful knowledge. We can, with the greatest sincerity, say that we gladly embrace the blessed truths of the Gospel, and 'tis the purpose of our hearts, as we have most of us profess'd ourselves Christians, so to continue stedfast in the faith; and hope our children will have the same wisdom given them. And we pray God still to continue it in your hearts to provide for our further instruction and for that of our children also, that we and they may still grow wiser and wiser.

And from the small measure of knowledge we have (being now as it were just wak'd out of sleep) we are so sensible of the benefit of the Gospel that we wish and pray that our whole nation may be brought into the same way. And we bless God he still inclines their hearts more and more to receive the Gospel of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

We can make no returns for your favours, but only our hearty thanks, and prayers to God that he would repay our benefactors a thousand fold into their bosoms, for the kindness they have shewn us.

We are at a great distance from you, and shall never see your faces in this world, but hope it will be our happiness, thro' the riches of Divine grace in Jesus Christ, to rejoice with you in heaven, our Father's house.

We are your very oblig'd friends and brethren in the faith and patience of our Lord Jesus Christ.

John ————,  
Isaac Wnaumpee,  
James Wohquanhekomeek,  
Abraham Naukutehewant,  
John Jouwoonaunt,  
Nicholas Uhwaunmut,

John Pohpnehonnuwot,  
Aaron Sonkewenaukheek,  
David Nanuanuekenuk,  
Ebenezer Poohpoonuk,  
Abraham Johtaunhkoonant,  
Ephraim Woonannuhqueen.

STOCKBRIDGE, July 17th, 1736."

In a letter of July 11th His Excellency Governor Belcher says to Mr. Sergeant: "I desire you to greet my children at Housatunnuk in the kindest manner from me, and let them know I shall be heartily glad to see them at Boston, with Corstar, their chief Sachem. I hope to see you with your people," etc.

Accordingly Mr. Sergeant, and a number of the Stockbridge Indians, with about as many strangers from Hudson's River, went



to Boston, and August 5th they waited upon the Governor & Council.

"The Lieutenant" (says Mr. Sergeant) "made a speech in which he, in the name of the rest, express'd great thankfulness for the kindness the Government had bestow'd upon them already, particularly in granting them a township for the conveniency of their living together. And in return [they] gave up their challenge to two miles of land, one mile on each side of the road from Housatunnuk to Westfield. [They] pray'd for the assistance of the Government in building a meeting-house and schoolhouse.

To which the Governor answer'd very kindly that the Government was well pleas'd with the inclination they had shewn to receive the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ; and so long as that good disposition remain'd would not repent the care and charge they had been at to accommodate them for their better instruction in the way of Life; hop'd they would go and answer our hopes and expectations from their good beginning, and that they should never want the favour of the Government; that they accepted very kindly the land they gave up their challenge to; that he would make known to the General Court their desire respecting a meeting and school-house, at their next session.

Then they made a present of skins, which the Governor was pleas'd to order to be sold and the money to be laid out in books for me: which, with other instances of his Excellency's generosity to me, I retain a most grateful sense of—and as it springs from the relation I stand in to this people it is a proof of his Excellency's great piety, and concern to promote the knowledge and practice of religion and virtue, and so shall I ever esteem myself so much the more bound to be faithful in my business."

From Westfield to Sheffield bounds is about twenty-six miles; the land therefore which these Indians gave up their challenge to is fifty-two square miles, and should be esteemed no inconsiderable return for the favour bestow'd.

August 6th. Mr. Sergeant and the Indians din'd with the Governor and Council, were courteously treated and receiv'd presents of guns, blankets, shirts, etc.; soon after which they return'd home, well pleased with the treatment they had met with. And tho' there were some difficulties attending the affairs of Stockbridge, particu-

larly respecting their lands not yet got wholly out of the proprietors' hands, yet in the general things went well; the Indians increas'd in knowledge and number, new families and particular persons coming to them from time to time, to live there and be instructed; and the Indians in general behav'd well. But about the end of August some of them went to a Kevtikaw or Dance, at Squampaumuk (a place about twenty-five miles distant from Stockbridge, in the Dutch country) where, being encompassed with temptations, some of them drank to excess; which was cause of great grief to Mr. Sergeant, and they themselves were fill'd with shame and confusion of face when they came home.

Mr. Sergeant, who had hitherto liv'd in English families, below the mountain, in January, 1736-7 moved up into the Indian town and liv'd with Mr. Woodbridge, who had built a house and brought home a wife, etc. Mr. Sergeant therefore was no longer under a necessity of living at such a distance from his people.

When his Excellency Governor Belcher, according to his promise of August 5th to the Indians, recommended it to the General Assembly to build them a Meeting-house and School-house, the Court granted it, as appears from a passage in Colonel Stoddard's letter to Mr. Sergeant:

"The General Court (says the Colonel) have ordered that a meeting-house of thirty feet broad and forty long, together with a school-house, be built for the Indians at the charge of the Province. And you and Mr. Woodbridge, with myself, are appointed to see these things effected."

As Mr. Sergeant had, by the help of interpreters, before this translated some prayers into the Indian language for their daily use, so now he had translated Dr. Watts' first Catechism into the Indian tongue, that the children might understandingly read and learn it.

Some things about this time appear'd with a discouraging aspect, and gave Mr. Sergeant much trouble, the principal of which was

that one of their Dutch neighbours not only refus'd to give up his Right for an Equivalent, which made the Indians uneasy, but also kept a store of rum by him of which he either gave or sold to the Indians, so that some of them drank to excess and were very troublesome. But this was matter of grief to most of them, especially to the Captain and Lieutenant, who exerted themselves to correct such disorders; and the Indians, in general, behav'd well. New families were from time to time added to their number, and there were frequent instances of Mr. Sergeant's baptizing persons who, upon careful examination, he found knowing in the principles of religion and seriously resolv'd to walk by the excellent rules of it.

Tho' the Indians went out this season as usual to make sugar, yet they return'd from their work every week, and attended the publick worship on the Sabbath. They also discover'd an inclination to the English customs; for a couple who were about marrying, enter'd their intentions of it, or made them known to Mr. Sergeant, who upon the two following Sabbaths publish'd the Bands of matrimony between Nau Kuchewat and Wauwoonemeen, and then married them by a form translated into the Indian language.

On the 7th of August Mr. Sergeant began to preach to the Indians in their own language, and in process of time became so perfect in it that the Indians were wont to say, "Our Minister speaks our language better than we do ourselves." And as it cost him a great deal of pains to make himself master of it, so it was no small advantage to him when he was able to use it freely in conversation with the Indians; for he was not only able better to acquaint himself with the religious sentiments of those who would make a profession of Christianity, but also to converse with strangers upon religious subjects when they came to visit their brethren at Stockbridge, or when he had opportunity elsewhere.

Mr. Sergeant, about this time, baptiz'd several persons. And that the reader may know what pains he took to inform the candi-

dates in the principles of Christianity, and to satisfy himself that they understood them, and that it was their serious purpose and resolution to live a religious life, I here transcribe from his *Journal* the concise account he gives of his treatment of them:

"Lord's Day, August 14th. A large auditory. I preached in Indian, Yokun and his wife propos'd themselves to baptism; both persons of good behaviour, and apparently well dispos'd to Christianity. The man had been a drinker, but seem'd now to be reformed—the woman had always appear'd innocent, and virtuously inclined. I took a great deal of pains to instruct them in the principles of Christianity, and to impress upon their minds a strong sense of religion, and to compose them to seriousness; and having good satisfaction of their knowledge and good inclination. Lord's Day, August 21st, I baptiz'd Yokun, his wife and three children. This week Umpaumut's son, Pmaupausoo by name, from the island in Hudson's River where his father was a chief, who had been here a little while, desir'd baptism, as also Nomshoos, who about a year before came from the Shouwonoos Country. I took pains to instruct them particularly in the principles of Christianity. They were both young. I was therefore the more concern'd for them that they should be well instructed and have their minds imprest<sup>1</sup> with a due seriousness and concern in what they were about; I therefore chose to defer their baptism a little longer."

"Lord's Day, August 28th—Auditory as usual. This week took a second and third opportunity to instruct the candidates for baptism, when another young man also appear'd desirous of baptism, Ukhihnauwegun by name. This week I took a great deal of pains to prepare the candidates for baptism. They appear'd very desirous of it, and seem'd to understand the doctrines of religion well. Lord's Day, September 14th, I baptiz'd them."

Mr. Sergeant had been inform'd that Indians living at Kaunameek, a place about eighteen miles from Stockbridge, to the N. W., were desirous that he should come and preach to them; he therefore sent a messenger, informing them that Lord's Day, September 11th, he would be with them; and in his *Journal* of that day says:

"I preach'd at Kaunameek. I had about thirty hearers. There were but

<sup>1</sup> "Simplified" spelling is obviously not so modern as its advocates maintain, since this is Mr. Sergeant's way in 1737.



few Indians that properly belong'd there; but they gave notice of my coming to all that liv'd near them, so that a considerable number were got together. Some of the chiefs of our Indians bore me company. I had prepar'd a sermon in Indian for the occasion; they heard me with great attention, and said they understood me.

"We were entertained very kindly. The chief man there, whose name was Aunauwauneehbeck, appear'd to be a rational, judicious man. He can speak a little English, and carries on some farming business and lives well. I asked him before I came away what he thought of what he had heard. He said he could not give any judgment yet, for he had not sufficiently inform'd himself. Christianity might be true; he could not pronounce against it, nor could he say it was right; but added that he should come to hear me sometimes at Housatunnuk, and inform himself further. I was well pleas'd with his answer, and exhorted him to enquire further into the matter and not to forget to pray to God to instruct him.

"Our Indians that were with me took pains to persuade them to embrace the Christian religion, and endeavour'd to answer those objections they suppos'd might arise in their minds against it; particularly the Lieutenant talk'd a great deal, and very well, upon the subject.

"Another man there, of some character and of good behaviour, who had been baptiz'd in his infancy by some priest, was well inclined to religion, and purpos'd to come and live with us."

A little more than a month after this, viz: Lord's Day, October the 9th, the two principal Indians of Kaunameek were at Stockbridge, and heard Mr. Sergeant preach.

"I took opportunity" (says he), "to discourse with them both, and particularly with the chief, who now was free to own that he believed the Christian religion was true, and that he was determined to be a Christian; and added that he had receiv'd such an impression on his mind, from what he had heard from me, and otherwise of the Christian religion, that he could not shake it off—that his thoughts had been much fix'd upon the matter; that even in the pursuit of his common business he could not but entertain himself with reflection of this nature. The other appear'd to be fully determin'd to come and live with us.

Lord's Day, 16th. Preach'd as usual. This week I went upon a visit to my friends in New Jersey. In the meantime the chief of the Kaunameek

Indians came hither, in expectation to see me and hear some further instructions in the doctrines of Christianity; and tarried about a week; seem'd much affected with what he heard of the Christian religion and very desirous of further instruction; purpos'd to come again when he could hear of my return."

That I may finish the story of these two principal Indians of Kaunameek, viz: Aunauwauneeekhheek and Wautaukumeet, I shall look forward to January 22, February 12 and April 16, 1738:

"Lord's Day, January 22d. I preach'd again at Kaunameek. Aunauwauneeekhheek, the principal man there, appear'd to be mightily engag'd in matters of religion: was desirous of baptism: sent his daughter, an only child, to learn to read; came himself, and tarried all the week; and I, having good satisfaction of his knowledge and faith, baptiz'd him and his daughter.

Lord's Day, February 12. I preach'd as usual. Present Aunauwauneeekhheek, and Wautaukumeet, from Kaunameek. The last left his son with me.

Lord's Day, April 16th. I baptiz'd Wautaukumeet and two of his children. He belong'd to Kaunameek, but is since come to live with us; is a man of about forty years of age, very good temper'd and of considerable knowledge—formerly addicted to drinking, but now reform'd."

The generous proposal of Mr. Hollis, to maintain twelve boys, was not till now put in execution; and what Mr. Sergeant says of it in his *Journal* is:

"January 11th, 1737-8. I began to keep the twelve Indian boys on Mr. Hollis's foundation. I took them into my own house and under my instruction."

It was in the spring of the year 1736 when the Rev. Dr. Colman received from Mr. Hollis the offer of maintaining twenty scholars at Housatunnuk. The Doctor's caution in the affair, mention'd before, delay'd the coming of the money till the spring of the year 1737. Some time also was taken up in getting their cloaths from Boston, making of them up, etc.; and even then there was no house in Stockbridge but Mr. Woodbridge's, which was small. Mr. Ser-

geant, therefore, who was building this summer, and intending to take the boys under his own instruction, tho't best to put it off till his own house could be prepar'd to receive them; and accordingly, having prepar'd it, hir'd a housekeeper, and at the time above mention'd he took them in.

It is probable his house would have been ready for their reception sooner, if he had not been in want of money to forward the building of it.

His salary was no more than one hundred and fifty pounds our Money, twenty-seven shillings and six pence of which was then equal to one ounce of silver; and by reason of a general scarcity, all provisions were very dear; little or nothing could therefore be spar'd from his salary towards building.

By a letter of April 25, 1737, he inform'd the Commissioners of his being about to build; desiring some assistance from them to defray the charge of it; in answer to which the honourable Adam Winthrop inform'd him that he would lay his letter before the Commissioners at their next meeting, which would not be very soon, for they lately met; and in one letter of July 30, and in another of September 8, the Secretary Mr. Winthrop inform'd him that the Commissioners had not yet met. But April the 6, 1738, he writes thus to Mr. Sergeant: "I laid before the Commissioners your letter for some allowance towards your building, and they voted fifty pounds to be paid you on that account."

As the sum granted by the Commissioners did not answer his expectations, not amounting to ten pounds sterling, so neither was it sufficient to relieve his necessities; for he, before this, was necessitated to run himself much into debt, as he informs Dr. Colman in a letter of June the 19th, in which he also says:

"I was indeed extremely disappointed in my expectations when I found by Mr. Secretary's late letter to me that the Commissioners had voted me no more than fifty pounds to assist me in my Settlement. Upon the reception

of Col. Winthrop's letter I immediately determin'd to apply myself to the General Court, not knowing where else to seek for assistance. Whether or no they will think it their business to help me, I cannot tell. However, I have put a petition into Col. Stoddard's hand, and by him wrote to the Governor with a great deal of freedom, praying for his favour in the matter—and I suppose the Colonel has put it forward. If I fail in that point I know not where I shall turn myself."

The General Assembly (which had all along encourag'd the Indians of Housatunnuk, and us'd their endeavours to promote the interest of religion among them, not only by giving them a township of land, that they might settle together, and by being at great charge and trouble in removing the inhabitants, but also in building a Meeting and School House, which the workmen begun last August) received and granted Mr. Sergeant's petition; voted him one hundred pounds in bills of the Middle Tenor, which was equal to about six hundred pounds our present Money, at fifty shillings per ounce.

His Excellency Governor Belcher, who upon all occasions discover'd a great regard for Mr. Sergeant, was very friendly to him upon this occasion, as appears from a passage in his letter of July 3d to Mr. Sergeant:

"I have (says the Governor) read with much satisfaction yours of 24th of May, which is full of the Gentleman, the Christian, and the Gospel Minister; and therefore inclin'd me readily to afford all my weight and influence in the Assembly, for your help and encouragement in the arduous but excellent work you are engag'd in. I am thankful to God for succeeding so far the endeavours of your friends, and that we have reason to hope more help may be obtain'd for you (thro' the goodness of God) from the same fountain, and you will always be sure of my assistance."

Mr. Sergeant, who had taken into his own house and under his own instructions, Mr. Hollis's twelve boys, found upon trial the burden was too heavy for him; and tho' he perform'd that service for near or quite a year, yet afterwards was oblig'd to take other methods with them. All whom he could persuade to it he sent



abroad into English families, where they were supported by Mr. Hollis's bounty, and went to school to perfect themselves in reading and writing; and those who refus'd going from home liv'd with their parents, and went to Mr. Woodbridge's school. To these Mr. Sergeant allow'd no more of Mr. Hollis's bounty than was sufficient to cloath them. And it was found upon tryal that those who liv'd in English families made much the best progress in their learning, beside the benefit of gaining the English language. The first time that Mr. Sergeant administer'd the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper to his people was June 4th, of which he gave Dr. Colman the following short account, in a letter of June 19th, 1738:

"The first Lord's Day in this month, we had the Communion of the Lord's Supper. There were eleven communicants of the Indians, who attended the ordinance with as much seriousness and apparent devotion as ever I observ'd in any people upon any occasion whatever."

Tho' the Indians had hitherto in general behav'd well, yet there had been divers instances of baptiz'd persons exceeding the bounds of temperance; and the Lieutenant himself, who had appear'd so very much engag'd in the Christian religion, had occasion to humble himself for the sin of drunkenness, before he came to this ordinance. "Which he did" (says Mr. Sergeant) "with a due appearance of seriousness, gravity and resolution of better obedience for time to come."

The Commissioners, upon Mr. Sergeant's desire, supply'd the Communion Table with two flagons, two dishes and some wine.

[On] Page 27 I informed the reader of Mr. Barclay<sup>1</sup> being

<sup>1</sup> Rev. Henry Barclay was stationed at "Fort Hunter," near the present Hunter, Montgomery county, N. Y., from 1725 to 1745, when he was obliged to leave. He was appointed rector of Trinity Church, New York, in 1746.

The parsonage of the Fort Hunter church, being of stone, is still standing and is kept in repair; the only remaining vestige of the mission to the Mohawks founded by Queen Anne. The silver communion service she gave is now in the custody of a granddaughter of Joseph Brant, the Mohawk leader, at Brantford, Canada.

employ'd among the Mohawks and of his design to get Episcopal ordination and to be a missionary to them, if the Society for Propagating the Gospel in Foreign Parts would support him. This his purpose he put in execution, went to England, receiv'd Episcopal ordination, and a mission from the Society to the Mohawks. And I find Mr. Sergeant recommending him to the Commissioners at Boston, in a letter of May the 9th, 1738, in the following words:

“I had just now a letter from Mr. Barclay, a young gentleman of Albany, lately arriv'd from London with a mission from the Society for Propagating the Gospel in Foreign Parts, to the Mohawks west of Albany; who tells me he has but a scanty allowance (*i. e.*, from the Society) and could obtain no salary for an interpreter or schoolmaster; and that he has thoughts of applying to the Commissioners at Boston for assistance, but would have my advice first. I cannot tell what stock the Corporation has, but I suppose it is scanty, by the allowances they afford their Missionaries. However I could heartily recommend Mr. Barclay to the notice and favour of the Commissioners. He is a worthy gentleman, and well deserves encouragement in his undertaking. And everybody who has the least acquaintance with the Indians and their manners, must be very sensible that 'tis a vain thing to send missionaries among them without supporting them well. There is no part in the Bishop's character more necessary in a missionary among the Indians, than being *given to hospitality*.”

That the reader may be sensible what a prospect there was of Mr. Barclay's being eminently serviceable among the Mohawks if he had been duly encouraged, I shall (asking Mr. Barclay's pardon) show by transcribing some passages contain'd in his letters to Mr. Sergeant. The following are from a letter wrote before he went for Orders, and dated in his School at Fort Hunter, June 11th, 1736:

“I am heartily glad to hear of your success. I pray God more abundantly to bless and succeed your labours, and may you enjoy abundant satisfaction in the discharge of your function here, and a glorious reward hereafter. I bless God I have no reason to despair of success in my Mission. They daily become more and more desirous of instruction, and would in all probability

make great progress both in the knowledge and practice of Christianity, were proper methods taken to instruct them; but I labour under great disadvantages for want of an interpreter, so that I cannot tell what progress they make in knowledge, nor can I proceed regularly in my instruction; and I almost despair of obtaining a perfect knowledge of their language without the assistance of an interpreter, which could I but enjoy for the space of two or three years, I doubt not but that I should be master of it; and should take greater pleasure and satisfaction in the discharge of my duty. Nevertheless I have the comfort of seeing a very great and daily reformation of manners among them, which indeed is the end of all our endeavours. I am almost amazed at the progress the youth make in reading and writing their own language. All the young men, from twenty to thirty years, constantly attend school when at home, and will leave a frolick rather than miss. Sundry of them write as good a hand as I myself (*which was fair and good*). As to the encouragement I have, for aught I see yet I must expect my reward in another world. I have now been here almost a year and a half, but have never receiv'd a farthing from anybody. The Assembly voted me thirty pounds for two years, but by reason of ——— I am not like to get it till a Governor comes over; and have no great hope of further encouragement from them. As for the Society, they have allowed me twenty pounds for one year. What further encouragement they will give me I know not. In the meantime I am at great charges. My board is six shillings a week, which is not above half my necessary expence."

In another letter, a little more than two years after he had taken Orders, dated *Albany, August 21st, 1740*, he says:

"I am satisfied I should have much greater success if I had a schoolmaster and interpreter. I had the satisfaction, last Lord's Day, to preach to a number of the Six Nations, who came to this town to treat with the Governor, who also was present, and has taken a great deal of pains to countenance my design. My Mohawk congregation behav'd so well that all the Auditory were exceedingly delighted.

I assure you I have the cause at heart and am well persuaded of your zeal; which that it may increase and meet with all imaginable success and encouragement, is the earnest prayer of," &c.

Is it not manifest from these things that Mr. Barclay discover'd a noble, generous and Christian spirit in giving himself to the serv-

ice of God among the Mohawks, that he might be an instrument in the hand of God of reforming and Christianizing them? And was not there a most encouraging prospect of his doing eminent service, not only to the souls of those perishing people but also to the British interest?

It is well known to us in this part of the world that the Mohawks, or Six Nations, are a terror to, and have in great measure the command of, all the natives of North America. The French have therefore used their utmost endeavours all along to engage them in their interest; and by their missionaries, who are constantly among them, they have drawn off many of them to settle at Canada, and more or less, every year, go over to them; from whom, in time of war with the French, the British provinces in North America, especially the Massachusetts and New Hampshire, suffer much. It is also well known that most of them remain in a state of heathenism, and that those of them who pretend to be Christians know but very little of the principles of Christianity; for tho' Mr. Barclay did what he could while he was among them, yet it was but a few of them that a single person could instruct, and that very imperfectly, for want of an interpreter.

Their circumstances, therefore, loudly call for the compassionate help of those who are able to promote the propagation of the Gospel among them and here I would beg leave to say the Honourable Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts do, out of the charity they are betruſted with, maintain missionaries at Boston, Newport, Stratford, and are frequently sending them to other places, where their parishioners are well able honourably to support them, which evidences it to be plain Fact, incapable of dispute, that they wanted not the ability to help these poor heathen.

It is evident also from the foregoing account that Mr. Barclay, who shew'd a noble and excellent spirit in his disposition to propagate the Gospel among these heathen, and to whom such a wide



door open'd, and who was so well qualify'd for the service, obtain'd from the Society but a scant support for himself, and could obtain none for a Schoolmaster and Interpreter. Both charity and policy do certainly call for the most vigorous endeavours to propagate the Gospel among the Mohawks. And the reader may easily judge whether the Society for Propagating the Gospel in Foreign Parts (who have the care and disposal of one of the noblest charities that has ever been known) would not employ that charity full as well if not better, were those sums given to support missionaries among the Mohawks, where the Gospel is not known, which are given to support missionaries in some of the principal towns in New England, where the Gospel has been faithfully preach'd ever since they were first planted, and where those of the persuasion of the Church of England are so numerous and wealthy that they are well able to give their Ministers an honourable support, without the help of the Society at home? Whether the former would not be more agreeable to the pious design of the Donours, as well as to the profess'd Ends of the Society, than the latter? Whether Mr. Barclay, who was so heartily engag'd in that excellent and self-denying service of propagating the Gospel among the Mohawks, should not have been encourag'd by a plentiful support from the Society, and also by the support of the School Master and Interpreter for his assistance, rather than a missionary at Boston, Newport, etc.? Who would not grieve to think that that good gentleman has been oblig'd to leave that service for want of encouragement, when there was such a prospect of his doing much good among those perishing nations? What other reason Mr. Barclay had for leaving them I am not able to say; but if he had no other than the want of a sufficient support and of an Interpreter, was not that reason quite sufficient?—for how could he answer the Ends of his mission under such disadvantages? I doubt not but that the honourable Society act with integrity and uprightness, and dispose of the charity in their hands in a manner that appears right and best to them, according to the information they have; yet at the same time I am

fully persuaded that, if they were well acquainted with the true state of things in this distant part of the world they would see just cause to alter their conduct. And I think the Rev. Dr. Colman's sentiments very just, as express'd to his Lordship the Bishop of London, upon this subject, in a letter of September 13th, 1753:

"Were your Lordship and the pious Trustees here on the spot I am sure you could not think the professed end of your charter and the design of the donors answer'd, in your supporting missionaries at Boston, Braintree, Newbury, Stratford, Bristol, Salem, Groton, &c. Or if seaports of great trade, such as Boston, Newport, Marblehead need to have Ministers of the Church of England for the sake of some inhabitants and strangers, yet are they well able to support their own worship; or did they want some assistance, there can be no pretence for it out of a fund sacred to God for sending the Gospel into dark and ignorant parts of the earth. They ought to be provided for some other way, and not by alienating a devoted and confin'd charity, which were to run the risque of sacrilege and great unfaithfulness."<sup>1</sup>

If indeed the honourable Society judge it of greater importance, more for the honour of God and the good of souls, more agreeable to the ends of their Charter and the charitable designs of the pious donors, to convert those of the Presbyterian or Congregational persuasion to the Church of England, than those poor perishing heathens to the Christian Faith, then it is not strange that they should employ the money in their hands as they at present do; but upon what grounds they should form such a judgment is not easy to apprehend.

But to return from this Digression:

The one hundred pounds which Mr. Holden directed Dr. Colman to employ for the benefit of the Indians at Stockbridge, Mr. Sergeant now propos'd to expend upon the females, by supporting some of the young women abroad in English families, as the best way to acquaint them with the English language and manners. But when he communicated his design to the Indians, tho' some of them, and the Captain in particular, lik'd the proposal well, yet

<sup>1</sup> See Dr. Colman's *Life*, pp. 142-143.

others, with the Lieutenant at their head, strongly oppos'd it; and tho' Mr. Sergeant us'd his best endeavours to persuade them, yet all was in vain; thro' the unreasonable jealousies the Indians entertain'd they would not consent to it. However, Mr. Sergeant did this Summer sent two of them abroad, one of whom was the Captain's eldest daughter; but they would not be content to stay so long as to be any benefit to them.

"I have (says Mr. Sergeant in a letter to Dr. Colman of September 14th, 1738) spent about five pounds upon two of our young women, in prosecution of Mr. Holden's design, but to little or no effect. Thro' a childish fondness for home they would not be contented to stay long enough where I sent them, to obtain any good by it. But as I have been so great a sharer in Mr. Holden's bounty, I make no account of it, nor desire anything for it."

The design therefore of employing the money for the benefit of the young women failing, and Dr. Colman being fully acquainted with Mr. Sergeant's necessities [he] gave him the money to assist him in his settlement.

"If you will take the said hundred pounds (says Dr. Colman in a letter to Mr. Sergeant) and use it for your present Settlement, you are welcome to it, as a Deodand to the Settlement of the Gospel, in your settlement, comfort and strength in the work before you. Mr. Holden has not only given me leave but even wills it, that I assist you in the work before you. And if there open any door for teaching some Girls in women's work, as was before proposed, inform me of it, and draw upon me before the year is out, for Fifty or even an Hundred Pounds more, and I will answer your draught. However, Sir, ask of the Commissioners, as in reason you ought, without regard to this private assistance."

He also, by the honourable Jacob Wendell,<sup>1</sup> Esq., who visited him at Stockbridge in September, receiv'd a present from the Corporation at home.

"By Col. Wendell (says Mr. Sergeant) I receiv'd one hundred pound in money; a kind and generous present from the honorable Corporation in London, for which I thank God and them."

<sup>1</sup> The grandfather of Oliver Wendell Holmes.

About this time Mr. Sergeant receiv'd from Dr. Colman a legacy of ten pound, left him by the Rev. Mr. Ward, Clerk,<sup>1</sup> late Minister of Kingston in New Hampshire (says Dr. Colman) Minister of Exeter, lately deceas'd (says Col. Winthrop).

And from time to time, Mr. Sergeant was reliev'd, by considerable presents, from generous and well-dispos'd persons. And without the helps I have mentioned he could not have proceeded in his settlement at Stockbridge, as everyone will be sensible who know that his salary was but one hundred and fifty pounds our money, twenty-seven shillings and six pence of which was then equal to but one ounce of silver. Was it then possible that he should spare one shilling of this small sum towards the charge of Building, etc., especially considering he liv'd in a place where all the necessaries of life must be purchased at a very dear rate, and where his tender heart could not but be mov'd to relieve the poor Indians, whose piteous circumstances daily pleaded for them, and were enough to move a heart much harder than his?

It was with a very grateful spirit both to God and his benefactors, that Mr. Sergeant receiv'd those donations. He esteem'd every kindness bestowed upon him on account of his Mission as a favour from Heaven, a new obligation upon him to be faithful in his work, and a talent for which he was accountable to the Lord of all; as in his writings he frequently express'd himself.

He also used his best endeavours to impress upon the minds of the Indians a grateful sense of the kindness of their benefactors; the account of which seem'd very much to affect them. And at the close of the year they were laid under a new obligation by a generous gift of three hundred pounds from the honourable Society in England, part of which was to be employ'd in purchasing ploughs, axes, hoes, etc., to help them in carrying on their hus-

<sup>1</sup> Rev. Ward Clark, Minister in Kingston, N. H., from 1725 to 1737.



bandry. How the rest of the money was expended does not appear from any of the papers before me; but I find by a letter from Secretary Winthrop to Mr. Sergeant that he judg'd it not best that the Indians should have the whole donation at once, but that it shou'd be gradually dealt out to them as their circumstances requir'd; which I therefore suppose was the method taken, and that it was from time to time us'd for their best advantage; and I am inclin'd to think that it was principally if not wholly employ'd for their encouragement in husbandry and building, from a passage in Governor Belcher's letter written to him on the subject, December 5th, 1738:

"I have talk'd with Mr. Secretary Winthrop (says his Excellency) of the disposition of the money come from the honourable Company at home, that it may be mostly employ'd to promote labour among your people, by giving them husbandry tools—as axes, carts, ploughs, &c., to assist in building English houses. To civilize them will be a good introduction to the Christianizing of them. I shall again talk with Secretary Winthrop and others of the Commissioners, that this method may be put in practice without delay." But after all it does not appear that they ever receiv'd the whole; tho' it might be so and Mr. Sergeant make no mention of it.

The former part of June this year Ephraim Williams, Esq., and Mr. Josiah Jones brought their families to Stockbridge and settled there; being two of the four English families who by order of the General Court were to settle there. Lieutenant Brown and Mr. Joseph Woodbridge were the other, who came some time after.

In the year 1739 several of the River Indians, who liv'd at a distance from Stockbridge, discover'd an inclination to hear Mr. Sergeant preach. Some came from distant parts to Stockbridge for that end, others sent for him to preach to them at the place of their abode and Mr. Sergeant fail'd not of improving all those opportunities to endeavour their spiritual good.

April 19th, 1739, Mr. Sergeant return'd from abroad, and in his *Journal* says:

"In the meantime (that is, while he was absent) there had been a stranger here from the Highlands, nam'd Maumauntissekun, on purpose, as he said, to hear me, who had been remarkably check'd in his former course of drinking.

Lord's Day, April 27. Preached as usual. Three strangers present, who said they came on purpose to hear me preach. In the evening they came to see me. I endeavour'd to encourage them in seeking after God, and said some things to confirm them in belief of the Being and Providence of God.

May 27th. This week came two young men from Danbury (a town on the west border of Connecticut) to hear me preach. One said he would come and live with us.

June 3d. These young men were at meeting.

June 10th. Preach'd as usual. Present seven new hearers from Kaunaameek and the neighbourhood, with Aunauwaunneekhheek at the head of them. At the same time they told me that the Indians of the Island were very desirous that I would come and preach to them. I sent word by Aunauwaunneekhheek that I would, God willing, be at the Island the 23d of this instant.

June the 17th. Preach'd as usual; present some strangers, and among the rest Maumauntissekun, who came on purpose to be instructed in the affairs of religion, and seem'd to be very desirous of instruction and inclin'd to come and live with us for that end. He is a man of some character among the Indians, and of a sober and thoughtful air. The next day I had opportunity to talk with him. I endeavour'd to shew him the necessity and importance of religion, encourag'd him with diligence and prayer to enquire after the truth.

June the 24th. According to their desire, lately sent by Aunauwaunneekhheek, I preach'd to the Indians on the Island in Hudson's River. I had an auditory of about thirty intelligent hearers, who gave good attention and seem'd well pleas'd, especially some of them, with my coming. The Indians from Kaunaameek were there. Some of the Dutch people that liv'd by the riverside invited me to lodge with them while I should stay, but the Indians would not consent to it. Aunauwaunneekhheek, in particular, said he would have me lodge with them on the island, that I might pray with them night and morning. I was entertain'd very kindly by the Indians, chiefly by the care of Weenkeesquoh,<sup>1</sup> who had provided for my entertainment tea, small

<sup>1</sup> An Indian woman who had liv'd at Stockbridge and kept house for Mr. Sergeant and Mr. Woodbridge.

and strong beer, and a fat lamb. In the evening I desired them to come together to consider and discourse upon the affair of religion. With them I had a long conference upon the Being, Perfections and Providence of God; the necessity of Revelation from him in order to inform us in his will, the truth and excellency of the Christian religion as a revelation from Heaven and the like. Some approv'd of what I said, but three or four shew'd themselves very averse to Christianity. A great many Dutch people were present at the service, to whom I preach'd in English; but their behaviour was much more disorderly than the Indians; and indeed by their behaviour they seem'd to consider the Lord's Day rather as a season for frolicing than for religious duties.

26. I return'd. In the meantime ten Indians had been here from a place below called Wukhquautenauk, with a design to hear me preach.

July 1. Present at meeting seventeen strangers, men, women and children, from Wukhquautenauk, including the ten above mention'd, who tarried all the week past that they might have opportunity to hear me. They all came, as they said, to inform themselves in the affair of religion. I preach'd the same discourse I had prepared for, and deliver'd at the Island. After service I discours'd with them privately persuading them in favour of Christianity. They seem'd to think favourably of it, particularly one more than the rest. (*N. B.* Wukhquautenauk is in Connecticut, about twenty-eight miles below us.")

By this account it is evident that there appear'd about this time an uncommon desire in the neighbouring Indians to hear Mr. Sergeant; but what effect his endeavours to serve them had, any further than is to be learn'd from the account above, I am unable to say. I shall also here transcribe, from Mr. Sergeant's *Journal*, some account of the Indians sending Belts of Wompum from one tribe to another; as also the messages that particularly accompany'd them, that the reader may understand the Indian customs in such cases:

"May the 12 (says Mr. Sergeant) came hither Jeremy Aunauwauneeck-heek, lately return'd from the Showanoos<sup>1</sup> who brought with him three belts and a string of wompum, with the following messages, viz:

<sup>1</sup> The Shawnees of Pennsylvania.

First belt—

Brother Netohkum (which in our dialect signifies My Elder Brother) don't think your brother Keshum (or Younger Brother) has hid himself somewhere in the woods. I design to live where I am, so long as the Lord our God shall spare me. As often as you look here you shall find your brother at Mukhauwaumuk, at the great Island, and at the River Spunnauweh.

Second belt:

I tell you something further. When I get up in the morning I will plant my corn; at noon it will be ripe, so that I shall have enough to eat till night. The next morning I do the same again, and so from time to time, as long as God shall give me life and strength.

This was delivered with one-half the belt; with the other, "Brother, don't hide any good thing from me."

Third belt:

I tell you something further (both in the dual number in Indian): Let us with consolation seek that which is good, and when we have found it let us hold it fast, as long as God our Lord shall preserve our lives. And let us always teach our children that which is good.

This word your brother that dwells at Mukhauwaumuk, and your brother of the Great Island, and at the River Spunnauweh, and your grandfather (that is, the River Indians that live interspers'd among the Showanoos) tell you so.

The string of Wompum brought an answer to what our Indians sent to them some time ago:

"Brother, I thank you for your word of advice; you told me drinking was not good. I now leave it off, and you shall not find your brother drunk again."

The Messenger added that they actually had made a law against buying any rum of the traders, and had broken some cags in which they had brought it to them, and spilt the rum.

"January 20th, 1739-40. Preach'd to a large auditory, consisting of many strangers, who were gather'd together here with a design to promote and confirm a league of neutrality among the several tribes of Indians in North America, in case there should be a war between England and France, which was then expected. This tribe had, about two months before, receiv'd a message which then came direct from the Scattekooks<sup>1</sup> which imported that the French and English Mohawks had already consented to stand Neuter; and this tribe were now desir'd to come into the Projection. They therefore prepar'd three belts of wompum, with distinct messages to each. Two of the

<sup>1</sup> Schaghticoes, of New York.



belts were to be sent to a tribe of Eastern Indians that live at a place they call Wtanshekaunhtukko; the third to a tribe still further eastward, at a place they call Naunauchowuk (the same I suppose which is generally in New England call'd *Norridgewock*<sup>1</sup>). It will perhaps be thought an excusable digression to insert those speeches in this *Journal*:

With the first belt they say:

Brother, We have always liv'd in strict alliance with you by leagues of friendship long ago entered into by our forefathers; and we have been wont from time to time to consult together what is best to be done, and to communicate our determinations one to another; we therefore depend upon it you will be willing to hear us, because we have always been friends.

With the first belt they say:

Brother at Wtanshe-kaunhtukko—By this we may know we are brethren, because we have one Father in Heaven, the Lord of all. Let us have a tender regard to our families. The white people, with whom we respectively live in alliance, are about to enter into a War. We only destroy ourselves by meddling with their Wars. They are great and strong, and reach to the clouds. Let us sit and look on when they engage. Don't let any of your people assist in their Wars, and while they fight let us sit and smoke together. Therefore three of your brethren send you this message, from the Highlands, Monhekun, and Scattekook.

Third belt:

Brother at Naunauchowuk:

Though you had begun a War with the English, you would regard us if we should desire you to leave off. You will without doubt not intermeddle if we insist upon it. Maybe the English think the Indians prevent their conquering their enemies, the French; therefore let us sit and smoke together and see who will be Conquerors.

A very just and rational scheme this, and had it succeeded would have been much to the advantage of the Indians, as well as to us. But there is little or no prospect of such a neutrality taking place, so long as the French have such an ascendancy over many of them.

Though the Indians had for some years past improved the interval land at Stockbridge, yet it was not divided to them that every one might know and improve his own property, until this year. In May Session of the General Court the Indians prefer'd

<sup>1</sup> Maine.

a petition to the Assembly that it might be done; and they accordingly appointed Colonel Stoddard and Ephraim Williams, Esq., to divide the land to them, which they did to the satisfaction of the Indians.

August 16 Mr. Sergeant was married to Mrs. Abigail Williams, eldest daughter of Ephraim Williams, Esq., lately settled at Stockbridge; a Gentlewoman whom he tenderly lov'd, and justly esteem'd as one of Heaven's greatest blessings; of which (in a letter to Dr. Colman) he speaks as follows:

"You will forgive me, Sir, if I think that most ingenious Woman is not the smallest gift of divine bounty that I have receiv'd since I undertook a life tho't to be so self denying. The more tenderly I love her the more thankful I am to Heaven, who has form'd her as if on purpose for me, and giv'n her to me as if (like the father of mankind) he tho't it not good for me to be here alone." And in her he took the greatest satisfaction the remainder of his days."

But to return. The gifts Mr. Sergeant this year receiv'd were no small help to him in defraying the necessary charges of a family. June the 17th he writes:

"This week I receiv'd four pounds fifteen shillings from an unknown gentleman in England.

June 26th. This week by Captain Williams I receiv'd from the Rev. Dr. Colman, of Mr. Holden's Charity, twenty pounds; Mr. Woodbridge also the same sum."

Dr. Colman had been inform'd that Mr. Sergeant was about marrying, and therefore says to him in a letter of June 1st:

"As I know the expence of settling yourself in a dwelling, etc., so it lies with you, Sir, now to command us, and when you please. The residue of the money for the current year is in Colonel Winthrop's hands. At the same time I do now send forty pounds, twenty for yourself and twenty for Mr. Woodbridge, by the hand of Ephraim Williams, Esq., your worthy neighbour, out of the money of the honourable Samuel Holden, Esq., of London, in my hands; and it is his pleasure I should assist you in the service you are

labouring in. And if you have need of further assistance this year for yourself or Mr. Woodbridge, be not backward but timely in letting me know of it, and your draught shall be answer'd to the sum of an hundred pounds."

In answer to which Mr. Sergeant wrote July 17, as follows:

"Your offer of assistance to me and Mr. Woodbridge, from Mr. Holden's money, is exceeding kind: the forty pounds Captain Williams brought us was very welcome. The expence of settling ourselves is indeed very great. You are sensible the value of bills is fallen considerable since our salaries were granted; and tho' we are not in circumstances of distressing want, yet such assistance as you offer would be very acceptable. I covet not wealth, but would gladly live as free as possible from the perplexing cares of life, that I may attend the proper business of my calling without distraction, which truly requires the most prudent and diligent application."

Accordingly, in a letter to Mr. Sergeant of November 10, the Doctor writes:

"I present to you and Mr. Woodbridge eighty pounds of Mr. Holden's money, fifty pounds for you and thirty pounds for Mr. Woodbridge. If your salary will not answer for the support of your family you must tell the Commissioners so by Mr. Secretary Winthrop. You need not let them know the assistance added by me: that is but an occasional thing. You ought to have a support from the Commissioners. What I've done for you and Mr. Woodbridge has hitherto pleas'd Mr. Holden well, and he adds his prayers for you in every letter, and has, I doubt not, your constant thanksgiving to God for him, and supplications on his behalf, as he earnestly desires."

It was with a humble and grateful spirit that Mr. Sergeant receiv'd these donations. In his letter to the Doctor of July 17th, he says:

"In every letter you write I see more of your native goodness and the power of divine grace, which has made you so great a blessing; and may it long continue you such. I blush to think how little I deserve the good opinion you are pleas'd to entertain of me, and how unworthy I am of the Divine bounty and repeated benefactions of men of Charity, partakers of the Divine nature. Pray for me that I may have grace faithfully to use the talents committed to my trust."

In another letter of December 26th:

"I received the fifty pounds you was pleas'd to present me with out of Mr. Holden's bounty, for which I am most thankful to God, to you, and to that worthy gentleman whose praise is in all the churches. Your letter is so full of kindness it almost confounds me. I blush to consider how little I deserve the least of all that goodness God is pleas'd to bestow upon me thro' the hands of His servants. May ten thousand blessings from the fountain of life and joy crown the heads of my benefactors! And may I have grace given me to improve every talent to the glory of my Lord and Master."

The Meetinghouse built for the Indians at the charge of the Province was now so far compleated that on November 29th (which was a day of publick thanksgiving throughout the Province) the inhabitants met, and attended the publick worship in it.

The Indians being much addicted to drunkenness render'd it necessary that Mr. Sergeant and others concern'd for their good should use all prudent and proper measures to prevent their running into excess. Accordingly they mov'd to the Indians to refrain those among themselves who were wont to make gain by bringing rum into the place, and selling it to others; which the well-dispos'd Indians freely came into, and agreed upon a penalty of forty pounds York money to be laid upon those who should do it. Those also who kept taverns in neighbouring places, and had sold drink to such Indians as were given to excess they reprov'd, and endeavoured to dissuade them from a practice which prov'd so hurtful to the Indians. But some evil-minded persons among the English and Dutch made a handle of those things to disgust the Indians; telling them that this was an unreasonable incroachment upon their liberty: that those who abridg'd them of the liberty of using drink would by and by incroach upon their other liberties; that they were us'd worse than slaves, that they were treated as if they were dogs, and the like. By these insinuations the Indians (who are as fond of liberty as of strong drink) were much disturb'd, and some of them went into great degrees of excess; and New Year's Day being at hand, which the Dutch frequently honour by being drunk upon it, by whose example the



Indians were easily led into the practice, Mr. Sergeant was greatly concern'd, lest it should be a day of great disorder with them; to prevent which [he] took a very prudent method which I shall give in his own words:

“December 30th, 1739. Preach'd as usual and proposed to have an exercise of public worship on New Year's Day, now at hand; for I suppos'd the Indians design'd to have a great frolick on that occasion, after the manner of the Dutch in the neighboring Government, whose example they are very apt to follow: and I thought to have a publick exercise on that day the most likely method to prevent such excess; which accordingly succeeded: for on that day (January the 1st) the Indians were universally at meeting, and there was no drinking at all, tho' there was plenty of rum in the town; which was a rare instance of moderation at that season.”

Tho' there were some disorderly persons among the Indians who were too free with strong drink, yet this was what the greater part of them lamented, and they still, in the general, continued to behave well.

This number at Stockbridge from time to time increas'd by the addition of new families from abroad; so that from about fifty, the number when Mr. Sergeant went among them, they were now increas'd to a hundred and twenty.

Mr. Sergeant, in his *Journal* of March 27th, 1740, says:

“The whole number of inhabitants is a hundred and twenty. Our number is increas'd by the addition of new families, but reckoning by births and deaths the number is somewhat lessen'd; which has one year with another been the case ever since I have been acquainted with these Indians.”

This perhaps is the case of the Indians in general who live bordering upon and among the English. Their numbers do not increase, but in some places they are diminis'd and come almost to nothing; for which divers reasons may be assign'd, viz: Their intemperance; they are so often drunk, both men and women; that it is doubtless ruinous to the constitutions both of men and women.

Their great irregularity in diet may be another reason; for they frequently go without eating anything two or three days, and when they come again where it is to be had they eat an immoderate quantity, set no bounds to their appetite, but crowd down whatever they can. Again, when they are sick they take little or no care of themselves or of one another; for so long as the sick person can stand and walk he goes out of doors upon all occasions, be it rain or snow or whatever the weather is, and whatever distemper he is exercised with: and in the meantime they make use of few or no means to help the sick. It is a wonder, therefore, that they be not all sick, and that any recover when they are so. In a letter of September 8th Dr. Colman inform'd Mr. Sergeant of the death of the honourable Samuel Holden of London, and adds: "So that spring of your comfort and support is cut off. Blessed be God that it run so long and so fully." But yet the Doctor once more assisted Mr. Sergeant and Mr. Woodbridge by sending them something of what remain'd of that gentleman's money. In a letter of December 20th he says:

"What I am able to do at present is to deliver into Mr. Brown's hands twenty pounds of Mr. Holden's money for you, and ten pounds for Mr. Woodbridge" the receipt of which Mr. Sergeant acknowledg'd in a letter of March 17th following:

"By Mr. Brown I receiv'd your obliging letter, with the money and books you sent. My obligations to you increase, and my gratitude I hope in some proportion. But God forbid that I should forget the Fountain of good from whence every stream flows! My heart and eye, I trust, are to him who has put it into your power and heart to help me. The funeral sermon<sup>1</sup> on Mr. Holden's death is excellent, which I read with great pleasure. How happy for and beneficial to the world are such large improvements in grace—how honourable to religion and the glorious Author of our Salvation! May many such shining examples of piety and virtue appear in the world, to instruct the ignorant, to reprove the vicious, and to encourage the hearts of the faithful."

<sup>1</sup> Dr. Colman's funeral sermon on the death of Mr. Holden, preach'd before the General Assembly, and printed at their desire, and by their order.

The Lieutenant's wife, of whom Mr. Sergeant has divers times spoken as a valuable and virtuous woman, died July 14.

"With a comfortable hope (says Mr. Sergeant) of Eternal life; spending her last moments in exhorting her husband and children to godliness." And when Mr. Sergeant visited her a few days before her death, and at her desire pray'd with her, she told him she was content to die, hoping by that means to be free from sin, which was now her burden; and if her life was lengthen'd out, it was likely, thro' temptation, she should be prevail'd upon to commit more sin.

The Captain's wife, also, whom Mr. Sergeant esteem'd a pious woman, died the March following, of a consumption.

"March the 29th. This evening (says Mr. Sergeant) died Kunkapot's wife, having enjoyed, all along in her sickness, a good hope thro' grace, of a happy eternity."

In the foremention'd letter of March 14th, 1741, Mr. Sergeant first proposed to Dr. Colman his thoughts of setting up a Charity House, afterwards call'd a Boarding School, for the education of children in labour and industry as well as learning. Experience taught him that the Indian customs and way of living were great impediments to the progress of Christianity among them, and their behaving agreeable to their profession; for the men lead an idle and indolent life, which is very unfriendly to religion; it being their custom for the women to do all the work, as getting wood, planting, hoeing, etc. The men generally esteem it a shame for them to follow any other business but that of hunting. Hence the women cannot, if they would, be acquainted with housewifery being oblig'd to carry on all the business abroad. Mr. Sergeant's design, therefore, was better to regulate their conduct in that respect, by taking their children when young and training up both sexes in business proper for them, that when they should be grown up they might be both able and willing to provide for themselves in a way of diligence and industry, which would in great measure free them from many of those temptations by which they are now insnar'd; and enable them to make a much better figure than they

now do or can do, while they continue entire strangers to all the arts of industry and good living, and indulge themselves in idleness.

"I have (says Mr. Sergeant to the Doctor) entertain'd thoughts (and they have made a strong impression on my mind) of attempting to set up a Charity-House for the instruction of our Indian children, both boys and girls, in business and industry, as well as in reading and writing and the matters of religion. Whether the motion be from God, time will make more manifest. I should be glad of your opinion of the thing. This I believe Mr. Hollis expected would be the end of his noble beginning. The design I am certain is good; whether it be feasible you may be a better judge than I. It is what I have tho't of for a long time, but suppos'd the jealousies of the Indians would be a bar in the way; but hop'd that difficulties of that nature would vanish with time. I have kept the design to myself, nor have I ever mention'd it to any of the Indians. It may perhaps be now time to act upon it. I doubt not but I can procure a good accommodation of land for such a purpose. The charge I know would be considerable; but after awhile it is to be hop'd, with the blessing of God, they may be able to maintain themselves, at least in great measure. If I should attempt such a thing, I pray God spare your life to assist in it by your advice, prayer and influence with your correspondents abroad, and to introduce me into their acquaintance."

Dr. Colman seems to receive the proposal with some surprise, yet blesses it; and I hope a blessing is in it, and pray God it may attend it, tho' at present it wants encouragement. The Doctor, in a letter of April 4th, replies:

*"Dear Sir:*

What mean you by your projected Charity-House? The God of Franksins lead and animate you, own and succeed you. I should wish to live to assist in it by the will of God. But it needs not at all my living to help it; if the motion be of God he will find hands. He makes hearts, forms purposes in them, and means to execute them. As Nathan said to David, so I am willing to encourage you to hope God is with you. We must not be sudden neither, we may project what others may execute. A good motion (say they) seldom dies in Parliament—and shall it in Providence?"

But I must leave this affair for the present, to attend Mr. Ser-



geant in a long journey of about two hundred and twenty miles to Susquahannah River, where he went with a design to open the way for a Mission to the Shonawoos Indians, so called, who live upon that river, in Pennsylvania Government, and about fifty miles from any English inhabitants.

But because I find the best account of Mr. Sergeant's proceedings in this journey given in a letter to George Drummond, Esq., of Edinburgh, president of the Committee of Directors for the Society for Propagating Christian Knowledge, I shall first here insert a letter from Mr. Drummond to Mr. Sergeant, and then give his answer, in which the account of his journey is contain'd. Mr. Drummond's is as follows:

*"Reverend Sir:*

In the course of correspondence with a view to see if the Society for Propagating Christian Knowledge could be any way useful in sending the glorious and everlasting Gospel among the Indians, among whom Satan's Kingdom has remain'd so long undisturb'd, we have heard with great pleasure of the unwearied pains you take in labours of this kind, in which our common Lord is pleas'd to honour you with great success. We desire to bless him for it, and to offer up our prayers for the continuance of his presence with you, and for the preservation of so useful a life. I have the command of the Society's Committee of Directors, as their president for the time, heartily to congratulate you on this account, and to express the satisfaction they have in the prospect of the help you generously offer to give the Missionaries we propose to settle for the forwarding that good work. The Rev. Mr. Dickinson and Mr. Pemberton give it as their opinion that forty pound sterling per annum is the least such gentlemen can subsist on. The Committee transmit this proposal to the General Meeting, which meets next month, with their unanimous opinion that it should be gone into; and we hope the Society will agree to the employing of eighty pound per annum for the support of two Missionaries in your parts. We have desir'd the Gentlemen to send us a list of proper persons to correspond with us on the subject of this Mission; to be authoriz'd properly by the Society for that end. But I am particularly ordered by the Directors, to entreat you will favour us with a particular correspondence with yourself, which be pleas'd to commence with an account of what advances Christianity

has made among the Indians hitherto, and to continue the history from time to time. The more particular you are it will be the more obliging. If you please to address your letters to me I will lay them before the Committee.

I am, with great esteem

Reverend Sir

Your most obedient humble servant,

GEORGE DRUMMOND.

EDINBURGH, Feb. 9th, 1740."

To the foregoing letter the following is Mr. Sergeant's answer:

"Sir:

Your favour of February 9th came to hand a few days ago, which has laid me under obligations to you and the honourable Committee of Directors, for the kind and undeserv'd good opinion you are pleas'd to entertain of me, and for your prayers (which I highly value) offer'd on my behalf to the God of all grace. I ask your continu'd prayers for me, that I may have grace to be found faithful and successful in promoting the Kingdom of our glorious Lord, who has honour'd me with so great and important a trust as that of preaching the everlasting Gospel, where his Name has not been known; and in which, thro' the grace of God, I've reason to hope my labour has not been altogether in vain.

There appears to me a fair prospect of a happy Mission to a tribe of Indians in strict alliance with ours, known by the name of the Showanoos, living in the Province of Pennsylvania, about two hundred and twenty miles distant from us; to whom our Indians have recommended the Christian religion, but as yet have receiv'd no direct and particular answer; only they have heard that what they sent occasion'd much talk among them, and that some propos'd the sending of two or three of their children here, to be instructed in Christianity in order to teach them.

It was of these Indians I spake to the Rev. Mr. Dickinson last Fall; letting him know that I design'd, by the favour of divine Providence to make them a visit, and to endeavour to open the way for the glorious Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ among them; and desir'd his interest and the Rev. Mr. Pemberton's with your honourable Society for the support of such Mission, if God should open the door for it.

And now I thank God and you, into whose heart he has put it to contribute

to this charitable design; which I pray God in his infinite mercy to succeed, to the glory of his name among the Gentiles, and to the honour of his Son, who is made head over all things to the Church.

Forty pounds sterling is indeed the least a gentleman employ'd in such service can expect. It is very necessary undertakings of this nature should be well supported, that the Missionary may have no other concern than to attend the business of his Mission, in which he will find he has work enough to do, and must put on resolution not to be shaken by small opposition. I intend (God willing) before winter to make my propos'd visit to those Indians, after which I may be able to give you a more particular account; but now proceed, according to your desire, to give a history of the advance Christianity has made among us."

The historical account here spoken of, Mr. Sergeant sent to the honourable Society in Scotland, but had no time to take a copy of it, as he inform'd the Rev. Mr. Pemberton of New York, to whom he sent it, to be transmitted to Great Britain. Had a copy of it been kept it would have been a very great help to me in composing this work; for Mr. ——— (Sergeant) from his own papers, memory, etc., doubtless was able to give a much better account of things than I can possibly do from the few papers before me: and without doubt he gave a very just and correct account of what pass'd from the beginning of his Mission to that time. After his history he goes on to say:

"Thus, Sir, I have given an account of the progress Christianity has made here, with some general account of our present state of affairs. I began to write presently after I receiv'd your letter in July last, and design'd to have prepar'd the answers to yours and sent it before Winter; but the afflicted circumstances of my family prevented me then, and by one interruption and another I have not been able to finish it till now. I have been so particular that perhaps I shall be thought tedious. In this point I hope your candour will excuse me. I have omitted a great many particulars. You will easily perceive in the perusal of this *Journal* that the Indians are a very difficult people to deal with; whoever undertakes to have much to do with them had need to fortify himself with an obstinate patience. Opposition I always expected, but met with it in instances where I dreamt not of it, and least expected it. The Devil has always his temptations and instruments to promote his cause. A number we have, I hope, that are truly converted.

Our affairs are now in a good and flourishing state, considering the opposition the Gospel has met with, especially from some profess'd Christians. I think the progress it has made has been extraordinary. May God own his work and bless it.

I purpose, by the favour of God, some time next month to make my visit to the Showanoos. What I meet with among them I will transmit you an account of. Let me have the blessing of your prayers, that however unworthy I may be made an instrument of promoting the Kingdom and Glory of our blessed Lord.

And may God crown all your pious and charitable designs with happy success, and you finally with immortal glory. And grant me the honour of being reputed, Sir,

Your most obedient, humble servant,

JOHN SERGEANT.

*Stockbridge,*  
April 29, 1741."

Mr. Sergeant, according to his purpose, set out on his journey, accompanied by some of his Indians, to the Showanoos, May the 26th. June 3d, he arrived at Sasquahannah. June 7th he preach'd to the Indians living on Delaware River as he return'd from Sasquahannah, and June 20th he got home.

These brief hints he has given in his *Journal*; and in a letter of June 23rd, to George Drummond, Esq., he gives the following more large account:

"STOCKBRIDGE, June 23rd, 1741.

*Sir:*

I am just return'd from Sasquahannah, where, according to my design, I have been in order to open the way for the propagation of the Gospel among the Showanoos. I found the place about two hundred and twenty miles distant from us, about fifty from any English inhabitants, and the road to it exceeding difficult. The Message we carried was this:

Brother, who have seen so many mornings here at Mukhhuwaumuk, you live in friendship with our Grandfather, our league reaches as far as the great Island and the river Auwuksauntuguh. The reason for my coming is because I dislike our way of living; our Father above does not approve of it; we weary out his patience.

You always stand in the presence of our Father, and he would have his children



turn about to him. I am come to turn you to him. If you pity your body and soul you will receive the Christian religion. It is always the privilege of an elder brother to teach his younger brother, if he knows anything that is good. If his brother be lost he will tell him. This is the way to life.

The enlightening of the eyes is in the Christian religion. You will some time come to know that we have been lost. You will see what it is to live in heathenism, if your eyes are open'd. In the end of the world you will see a Good prepar'd if you embrace the Christian religion in truth; and if you believe it not you will see a punishment provided. Formerly our forefathers us'd to send messages to one another, but their speeches were nothing. They were wont in the conclusion of their speeches to say: Now I see the sun at noon; you shall always see clearly—you shall see nothing amiss. But these things which they spake in darkness were nothing. The only true light which enlightens the eyes is the Christian religion.

Brother, this is our Teacher; we have brought him with us, thinking perhaps he may open your eyes a little that you may see the way to eternal life. We wish you would hear him. He is our elder brother.

This message your brother at Mauhekon sends you. He likes the Christian religion.

It must be noted that the Showanoos call our Indians their elder brother, and ours call them their younger brother.

When we had deliver'd this message they retir'd a little while, and then brought in their answer, which was to this purpose:

"It is true we have one Father above, and we are always in his presence. The Indians have one way of honoring and pleasing him, and the white people have another; both are acceptable to him. I am glad to hear from my brother and to cultivate friendship with him. He shall always find me here if he has any message to send; but Christianity need not be the bond of union between us. As for your Teacher, I cannot understand him. If I could understand him it might be well to hear him, but he speaks in an unknown tongue."

It was easy to see by this answer they had no mind to receive Christianity. However, I desir'd them to hear something I had to say, and they agreed it should be then immediately. I went out about half an hour to prepare my interpreter by reading my discourse to him. When I came in again I found many of them dispers'd, and while I was speaking their chief went out. They gave no serious attention at all to what I said. When I had done they presently fell to talking, and reproaching Christianity; and shew'd an utter aversion to it. I would have enter'd into a debate with them and endeavoured to remove their prejudices, and answer'd

their objections; but they would hear nothing of the matter. I found they had strong and invincible prejudices against Christianity, at least the Protestant religion, deriv'd, it should seem, from the French, and confirm'd by their own observation of the behaviour of that vile sort of men the traders, that go among them; for they said (which I believe is an unhappy and reproachful truth) that they would lie, cheat, and debauch their women and even their wives, if their husbands were not at home. They were further prejudic'd against Christianity from the inhospitable treatment they had sometimes met with from those who call themselves Christians. They said the Sinnicas<sup>1</sup> (a tribe of Indians much under the influence of the French) gave them their country where they now live, but charg'd them withal never to receive Christianity from us.

The French spread their influence far and wide, and indeed I believe (which I was not so much aware of before this journey) that they have scatter'd their poison among all the Indians of North America, and have been the means of stirring up that jealousy and suspicion among our Indians which has made us so much difficulty in dealing with them; for they tell them that the design of the English is to enslave and then to destroy them, under the pretense of making them Christians. By these strong prejudices I found them so averse to the reception of Christianity that I was discourag'd in the attempt, and so left them, pitying their ignorance and praying God to open their eyes.

When I returned to Delaware<sup>2</sup> I got the Indians inhabiting there together, and preach'd to them in our dialect, which they could understand without an interpreter. They were about thirty in number to hear me, who gave a very diligent attention and seem'd to be mov'd, had no objections to make but were de-

<sup>1</sup> Senecas, of Central New York, the fiercest of the Six Nations.

<sup>2</sup> This must refer to that part of Pennsylvania and New York watered by the Delaware river; he certainly did not go as far south as the State of Delaware.

sirous of further instruction. I preached to them twice. The whole tribe is about four hundred in number, but is much dispers'd, having no accommodation<sup>1</sup> of land; but I have engag'd some gentlemen to endeavour to provide for them in that respect: which if it can be effected to their satisfaction, there is a hopeful prospect of a successful Mission among them. I have drawn out a *Journal* containing a particular account of the propagation of Christianity among us, which I have sent to the Rev. Mr. Pemberton to transmit to you, which I hope will go safe.

Sir, I am your most obedient, etc.,

JOHN SERGEANT.

*To George Drummond, Esq.,  
At Edinburgh.*

A generous and charitable spirit Mr. Sergeant discover'd in this visit to the Showanoos; a tedious journey it was, and must of necessity be of considerable expence to him; and his reward is doubtless with God, tho' that poor people be not gather'd.<sup>2</sup> But from men he receiv'd not anything as a consideration of his hard service.

As Mr. Drummond, in his foregoing letter desires, by order of the Directors, that Mr. Sergeant would favour them with a particular correspondence and that he would begin it by giving them an historical account of the progress religion had made among the Indians, etc., so Mr. Sergeant comply'd with their desires, sent an historical account and wrote the foregoing letter. But I find no return he ever had from Mr. Drummond or any other member of that Society, nor any further correspondence with it; except a letter Mr. Sergeant wrote to the president, for the time, of that Society of May the 18th, 1749: desiring if it fell within their sphere, that they would assist in promoting the boarding-school then begun at Stockbridge. Whether Mr. Sergeant's letter fell by the way,

<sup>1</sup> A reservation, as we now term it.

<sup>2</sup> Isaiah 49:4.5.

or what else happen'd to prevent a friendly correspondence, I am not able to say.

Some time before this Mr. Sergeant wrote to Dr. Colman, desiring he would procure for him Dr. Watts's Works, except a few pieces already in his hands; which I suppose the Doctor did without charge to Mr. Sergeant. Before this I find him acknowledging, in a letter to the Doctor, the receipt of Dr. Watts upon Prayer. And June 1st, 1742, Dr. Colman says to him:

"I enclose for you twenty pounds out of the bounty of Madam Holden and daughters, to assist in your support in your singular services for the Kingdom of our Lord and Master. With this I send you also two packets containing six more volumes of Dr. Watts's Works—one packet containing *Human Understanding*, *The World to Come*, and *The Use and Abuse of the Passions*. The other packet has his *Humble Attempt*, *Strength and Weakness*, *Heaven and Hell*. I put in a sermon of Dr. Sewall's and Dr. Chauncy's and my own."<sup>1</sup>

And to shew the candour and gratitude of Mr. Sergeant I here transcribe the substance of his letter to the Doctor on this occasion:

"*Reverend Sir:*

'Tis several months since I receiv'd your letter by Mr. Williams, with twenty pounds, for which my thanks have been due, and should have been return'd before now, had I not waited for the packet, that I might, being affected with greater gratitude, return my thanks with a double zeal. The books are lately come to hand, a most acceptable present; nor have I had time to peruse them, more than just to have a taste of Dr. Watts's spirit. When I speak of Dr. Watts's spirit in his writings I mean something the most excellent to be found in human nature, and near akin to angelick dignity. There is something so just and rational, and at the same time so modest, candid and generous in that gentleman's sentiments that they strongly impress the mind and engage the attention and affections. Would to God the same spirit of candour and superiour devotion shew'd itself in all writings, especially of Divines, and reign'd in the heart of every Christian—how many needless controversies would be ended by it, and how much

<sup>1</sup> Probably Joseph Sewall (1688-1769), son of the great Samuel Charles Chauncy (1705-1787) pastor of the First Church, Boston.



sinful division cease in the Christian world! Alas, how much need have we at this day, of the same candour and largeness of soul! Certainly methinks that devotion must be less acceptable to God, which subsists in a soul confin'd and narrow towards its fellow men. May divine grace enable me to be wiser and better by those means Providence by you has put into my hands to make me so; and may the blessings of God rest on you for all your kindness to me. I am asham'd to deserve so little of the generous and benevolent notice you have taken of me: but I know 'tis your greatest satisfaction to do good; nor will heaven forget to reward the benevolence of your heart, how little soever I have merited your kind notice. Forgive me, Sir, if gratitude constrains me to write what perhaps will be offensive to that modesty which almost makes you forget your good deeds. I thank you particularly for your own sermon, and am glad to find in it so just a censure of some things which unhappily darken the glory of what has appear'd to bear so many marks of a divine work in this land. I have the satisfaction to inform you that there seems to appear a more than common spirit of seriousness and reformation among our Indians, and a pretty general disposition among the Indians in these parts round about us to receive instruction."

Dr. Colman, being acquainted with Mr. Sergeant's design of setting up a boarding-school at Stockbridge, as before related, inform'd the Rev. Mr. Isaac Hollis of it, who was disposed to encourage it, as appears from the Doctor's letter of September 27th, 1742, to Mr. Sergeant, in which are the following passages:

"Yesterday came to me another letter from the Rev. Mr. Hollis, wherein he expresses his wonder and very great offence that nothing more is done by us here in New England for the propagation of Christian knowledge among the heathen; which declares, he thinks, that we have no care for their souls.

"You at Boston (says he) might save it out of your fine Hollands, silks and laces and superfine woollen cloths, and have a school erected for heathen children in imitation of what he has essay'd already."

"As to our superfluous expences, I must answer and plead guilty; but as for the school the difficulties attending it, from the indisposition of the Indians to send their children, or those to come, if a school were open'd, I must leave you to lay before him. The good gentleman promises to lend a helping hand to such a school if it were set up here."

That charitable and generous gentleman Mr. Hollis had been at the expence of about two hundred and eight pounds sterling in the space of about four or five years, for the benefit of the Indians at Stockbridge; which was then upwards of one thousand pounds our money; as appears from a passage in Dr. Colman's return in compliance with Mr. Sergeant's request, August 20th, 1743, the whole of which will by and by be inserted. The passage is:

"November 19, 1736. I receiv'd from Mr. Hollis his bill on Colonel Wendell, to pay fifty-six pounds sterling for the education of twelve Indian boys at Housatunnuk, under the care of the Rev. Mr. Sergeant—and August 15, 1738, I had a second order from him for three hundred and forty-three pounds our money. And again May 17, 1740, a third order, for four hundred and forty-seven pounds, nine shillings."

But what have we done in comparison of him? Have any of our wealthy professors put to their helping hand to this laudable and glorious Design? While he has been at the expence of maintaining twelve boys, has any private gentleman in New England been at the expence of maintaining one? If therefore Mr. Hollis had been inform'd how little we do, is it at all strange that he should "express his wonder and very great offence that nothing more is done by us here in New England for the propagation of Christian knowledge among the heathen?"

Mr. Hollis also, in the forementioned letter to Dr. Colman, desir'd an account from Mr. Sergeant how his money had been expended, and to what purpose. Mr. Sergeant therefore wrote to him, and not only gave him a particular and satisfactory account how his money had been laid out, but also of what advantage it had been; that several of his scholars had made great progress in learning, etc. But Dr. Colman having transcrib'd the substance of that letter in his recommendation of Mr. Sergeant's proposal of a more effectual method for the education of Indian children, which will come in hereafter I shall not insert it here.

The difficulties which Mr. Sergeant apprehended would attend

setting up a boarding-school, viz: the unreasonable jealousies of the Indians, vanish'd more and more, and he now tho't them ripe for such a proposal, and therefore wrote to Dr. Colman upon that subject, January 24th, 1742-3:

"I am much pleas'd with Mr. Hollis's projection for a School—wrote you a year or two ago about that matter—then thought the Indians would not bear such a Design; but now their temper, especially of late, seems to be much alter'd for the better, and a more than ordinary spirit of religion seems to prevail. Thanks be to Divine grace for it! I am now of opinion there is little or nothing on the part of the Indians here and in their neighbourhood, to discourage such an attempt. And if you think it worth while (as indeed I think it is) to undertake so great a thing, I pray you, either by yourself or by the assistance of some friend that has a turn of mind for such Projections, to draw up a general plan of a School for the education of Indian children which shall provide not only for their instruction in learning but also in labour; and send it to me and I will try the temper of the Indians with it. You may make some guess of the different temper prevailing now among the Indians from what did a few years ago, by this: that two of our young women, not long since, of their own accord desir'd me to provide them places among the English, that they might live with them and support themselves by their own labour, in order to learn the English language and manners; tho' a few years ago they would not be hir'd to it. And accordingly I sent two of them to Northampton, where they liv'd contented as far as I know."

And in another letter of April 7th he adds upon the same subject:

"You will find in what I have written to Mr. Hollis that I have proposed the affair of the free Boarding-School to the Indians, and that they are mightily taken with it. I wait with impatience for an answer to what I wrote you last.

What Mr. Sergeant wrote to Mr. Hollis he sent unsealed to Dr. Colman, to which the Doctor has respect in the beginning of his letter of May the 18th, 1743, to Mr. Sergeant:

*"Reverend and Dear Sir:*

Yours of January 24th and April 7th are before me. I made no answer

to the first, waiting for yours to Mr. Hollis, which has been long in coming. I have cover'd it to Mr. Hollis. It will be very acceptable to him. The account given of the happy disposition among your Indian young people, both male and female, is admirable; and I give thanks with you to the blessed Spirit of God. I hope it will encourage Mr. Hollis to go on; and I purpose to ask Mrs. Holden's leave to apply One Hundred, our Currency, toward your projected boarding-school. I hope the Commissioners of Boston will make some allowance towards it, and I shall be ready to join here in a subscription for some annual contribution. But as for my drawing up a general plan, as you desire, of such a school, it is out of my line, and we must rely on yourself to do it. You must needs have a more clear idea of the thing than we here can; that religion and labour go together in it is, to be sure, most natural. I pray God to bring forward such a foundation. Old as I am, I have sent a copy of your letter to Mr. Hollis unto Dr. Avery, to communicate it to the Indian Corporation at London; and the same I have copied out for the Commissioners here at Boston. It may be my last service, and I hope will be a good one.

Dr. Colman having declin'd drawing up a general plan, etc., and desiring Mr. Sergeant to do it, he accordingly, in a letter of August the 1st wrote his Proposal of a more effectual Method for the Education of Indian Children, etc., which was as follows:

Stockbridge,  
August 1, 1743.

*"Reverend Sir:*

I now send you a general and rough draught of that Design for the Education of Indian Children which I have some times formerly hinted to you that I had formed in my mind, with a desire that you would communicate it to the World in as publick a manner as possible, and with such recommendations as you may think proper.

What I propose therefore in general is, to take such a method in the Education of our Indian Children as shall in the most effectual manner change their whole habit of thinking and acting; and raise them as far as possible into the condition of a civil, industrious and polish'd people; while at the same time the principles of virtue and piety shall be carefully instilled into their minds in a way that will make the most lasting impression; and withal to introduce the English language among them instead of their own imperfect and barbarous dialect.



And to accomplish this design I propose to procure an accommodation of about two hundred acres of land in this place (which may be had without any cost of the Indian proprietors) and to erect an house on it, such as shall be thought convenient for a beginning; and in it to maintain a number of Children and Youth (not under ten nor above twenty years of age) and to have them under the direction, care and tuition of two Masters, one to take the oversight of them in their hours of labour, and the other in their hours of study; and to have their time so divided between study and labour as to make one the Diversion of the other, that as little time as possible may be lost in idleness. It will, I think, be necessary there should be two masters for this purpose, because it will be too tedious a task for one. I propose that the fruit of their labour shall go to their own maintenance and to carry on the general design; except perhaps some particular Premiums out of the profits of their labour, if it can be afforded, to encourage industry. I propose also to have a stock of cattle, &c., maintained on the place for the same purpose.

I propose to take into the number, upon certain conditions, from among any of the tribes of Indians round about; that by their means, under the blessing of God, the principles of vertue and Christian knowledge may be spread as far as possible, which perhaps in a course of years may by the grace of God open the way for the propagation of Christianity to the remotest tribes.

To lay the foundation and to support so great a Design as this will, without doubt, cost a great deal of money, the supply of which depends altogether upon the smiles of Divine Providence and the charity of good people who may think proper to favour it.

The need of some such Design as this is very obvious to all that are in any measure acquainted with the disposition and state of the Indians in America. It is well known that Vertue and Piety make but a slow progress among them in the methods that have hitherto been used to promote those ends. Nor can I think of anything so likely as what is here proposed in human probability, to root out their vicious habits and to change their whole way of living. I hope therefore the apparent goodness of this design will recommend it to all charitably-disposed persons who would gladly honour God with their substance; and that it will approve itself to and be promoted by, persons of all Parties, since it is a design generous in its intention and calculated for the common good of a very miserable and degenerate part of our race, and has no party-view in it at all. I persuade myself therefore

that all those who are concerned for the glory of our common Maker and the Father of the spirits of all flesh, and for the Honour of our common Saviour, to whom the heathen are given for his inheritance, and the utmost ends of the earth for his possession, or that are only inspired with the generous sentiments of compassion to the miserable, will unite in promoting the design here proposed.

If Providence encourage and succeed this design, and a fund sufficient to carry it on can be procured, I purpose to enlarge the Foundation so as to take in girls as well as boys, to be educated in a manner suitable to the condition of their sex; for I think the cultivation of both the sexes has a natural tendency to improve each other more easily and successfully.

I design the discipline to be used with them shall be as strict as those will bear who know nothing like government among themselves, and have an aversion to everything that restrains their liberty.

I know it is apt to be suspected in such designs, pretended to be for the publick good, that there is some self-interest at bottom which is the spring of the motion. If the world suspect anything of this sort in the present Projection, as some no doubt will, and the rather perhaps because it has been amused with projections of this kind, which have appeared to many were personal and selfish, or at best only Party Designs, I know not how to give any further satisfaction for the present than to declare solemnly that I have no other aim than the good of the Indians, and that I have no expectation of any personal benefit at all more than the mere satisfaction of being instrumental under God, of doing them so great a kindness, and rendering them a more happy Society by cultivating humanity and vertue among them.

That the Indians, in general, are a people difficult to be reformed from their own foolish, barbarous and wicked customs, the unsuccessfulness of attempts upon them for this purpose is a melancholy proof, which though it may appear discouraging in further endeavours, yet I think to a generous mind it should rather be improved as an argument to form and execute new Projections for this purpose. And indeed perhaps the neglect of promoting industry among them is the chief moral reason of so little being done to purpose in forming their manners; and therefore I hope the want of wish'd for success in other attempts will be no objection with any that desire to be benefactors to mankind, against contributing their part to this, which I think has so apparent a tendency to promote industry and humanity among a barbarous people. But tho' I think the design here proposed has the probable

appearance of proving successful, yet I do not flatter myself with any romantick expectations of accomplishing *all* the ends proposed, at once; nor is it to be expected, in the ordinary course of things but that a great deal of cost and pains with respect to many particular persons will be lost. This is what happens of course in all designs of this nature; and yet it is to be hoped some good will be done. Nor will the benefactors lose their reward with God, though the design should not be crowned with all the happy success [*which*] might be wished and hoped for. The mere suspicion that the design in the event will prove unsuccessful ought not, I think, to discourage the attempt. How many are there that frustrate the very Grace of God itself—how many, with respect to whom Christ has died in vain! And yet (to speak after the manner of men) this was no hindrance to his laying down his life for sinners. He indeed has obtain'd all the recompence in the salvation of souls which he had in his eye; and God all the glory of His benevolent purpose. He sees the fruit of the travail of his soul, and is satisfied. Nor will any benefactors here lose the praise and reward of their gracious intention and endeavours. (See Isaiah 49:1-6.)

It may perhaps with some be an objection against attempting anything of this sort, that the Indians are a base, ungrateful people, insensible of kindnesses done them. To this I reply that though it be true that this is the base, ungrateful temper of Indians, yet I think it is rather an argument in favour of a projection calculated to promote humanity among them, than otherwise; for the objection supposes them to be greatly debased, and shews the need there is of cultivating a soil so barren, or rather a soil so overrun with hateful weeds and pricking thorns. But whatever weight this objection might have with others, certainly it ought to have none with a Christian, who is commanded to imitate the beneficence of his Heavenly Father, who does good to the evil and unthankful. Had this consideration sway'd the mind of our blessed Saviour, would he ever have shed his blood for those who pursued his life to death? Nor did God refuse to distinguish the Israelites with his peculiar favours from all the families of the earth because they were an ungrateful, stiff-necked and rebellious house.

I would not have it thought from what I have written above, that all that has been done here to introduce Christianity and good manners has proved altogether in vain; for through the grace of God some good effects have attended our labours here, and the Indians seem now well prepared for the execution of what I have here proposed; which their jealousy would have been an effectual hindrance to a few years ago.

I shall be glad of the thoughts of candid and ingenious gentlemen communicated to me for the improvement of the design here proposed, and shall be ready to answer any queries that may be made in relation to it. Thus, Sir, you have what I desire may be communicated to the publick from me. It will be well perhaps that you should preface this with some general account of what Mr. Hollis has done, and what he expected from this country in prosecution of his design, which was what suggested to me the design proposed above. Some gentlemen seem to be of opinion that this is not a happy time to set such a design on foot; which for aught I know is true, but I do not think it best to postpone it on that account: for who knows when we shall have a *better time*? It is possible it may be *worse*. Nor would I wish to have your blessed Master take you from us till you have help'd in laying this Foundation also for the increase of glory to his name by promoting this scheme, on which I confess my heart is much set, and which will (I hope) prosper the better for your countenancing it.

I thank you for your kind letter and for the pamphlets that accompanied it—and am

With great honour and reverence

Your most obliged humble servant,

JOHN SERGEANT.

Hadley, August 9.

P. S. As I have tho't it necessary there should be some persons proposed to receive and disburse the monies that may be collected for the purpose above, I have thought of the Hon. Col. Stoddard and Col. Porter,<sup>1</sup> the Rev. Mr. Edwards<sup>2</sup> of Northampton, Major Williams and Col. Oliver Partridge<sup>3</sup> for this purpose; with whom I have conversed on the affair, and have their consent to be proposed as persons willing to take this trouble on them; which you may, if you please, signify to the world.

J. S."

Dr. Colman's Return in compliance with Mr. Sergeant's request, is as follows:

"It having pleas'd my Rev. Brother thus openly to address and oblige me, I do most willingly publish his letter: and if my name and hand can

<sup>1</sup> Oliver Partridge (17-1792), a noted lawyer of Hatfield and a member of the Colonial Congress.

<sup>2</sup> Either Timothy Edwards, Mr. Sergeant's father-in-law, or his great son, Jonathan.

<sup>3</sup> I cannot identify him.



serve in any measure to promote the happy Foundation which his heart is set on (I humbly hope under some special influence from above) I give them with all my heart; with thanksgiving to God who many years ago was pleas'd to incline my honour'd friend and Rev. Brother Mr. Isaac Hollis (then of London) into those Bounties to us which are now issuing in this proposal of a Boarding-School for the more effectual instruction and education of the Indian children in the western borders of our Province. It was about the year 1731-2 that Mr. Isaac Hollis (nephew to Thomas Hollis, Esq., the great benefactor to Harvard College, and soon after his pious uncle's decease) sent me a hundred pounds sterling with his particular directions how to distribute and lay it out; adding 'that he had seen many of my letters to his uncle, and his to me, which now led him into his writing to me, and this his gift to us.'

In the year 1734, when he had seen the printed account of the ordination of Messieurs Parker, Hinsdale and Secombe, and their Mission to the Indian tribes on the eastern and western borders of New England, Mr. Hollis then earnestly made me a most generous offer of twenty pounds sterling per annum for ever, for the support of a fourth Missionary; but in faithfulness I advis'd against such a disposition of his money, and as earnestly proposed to him the application of it for the support of a Missionary thro' the wide spread of the destitute settlements I had heard of in the province of New Jersey; but he did not approve of my advice.

Within two years after this I heard of a very promising Door opening for the Gospel among the Indian tribe at Housatunnuk, and that a person of Mr. Sergeant's character for piety and learning (then one of the tutors in Yale College in Connecticut) was willing to quit his Fellowship and the prospect he reasonably might have of one of the best Settlements our country could afford him, in any of our vacant churches, and to devote himself to the glory of Christ in the service of the souls of those poor heathen families; whereupon I immediately let Mr. Hollis know that now I could freely and earnestly advise him to fix his twenty pounds sterling per An. for the support of this Mission.

In answer to this motion, Novemb. 19, 1736, I receiv'd from Mr. Hollis his bill on Colonel Wendell to pay £56 sterling for the education of twelve Indian boys at Housatunnuk, under the care of the Rev. Mr. Sergeant, and Aug. 15, 1738, I had a second order from him for £343 our money—and again May 17, 1740 a third order for £447.9s. (Errors excepted.)

Upon this gracious call and bountiful direction of Divine Providence Mr. Sergeant has been laying out himself gladly from year to year, in the strength of God, in the trust committed to him, with Caution, Care and Diligence, according to the measure of wisdom given him from on high, whence every good and perfect Gift comes down, both the heart and opportunity for the doing good.

On the sixth of May, 1743, Mr. Sergeant cover'd to me a letter to be forwarded to the Rev. Mr. Hollis, giving him a particular account of the 'laying out his moneys for the maintenance of the boys, and of the methods he had used for the cultivating humanity and introducing the English Tongue and Manners among them, and for their proficiency in knowledge, vertue and piety; by which means, through the blessing of God several of them are affected with a sense and relish of divine things; and one of them in particular has made extraordinary progress in his learning, and appears truly pious, and has been singularly serviceable to him, assisting him in his translations, expositions and applications of the Scripture; and also very helpful among the young Indians in a general religious Concern that has of late prevailed among them.' Mr. Sergeant adds "that this young Indian is already well qualified to keep school among his countrymen and within a few years will probably be fit to be a Preacher of the Gospel to them."

Two or three other of his boys, Mr. Sergeant says, are serviceable in improving the rest of the Indians in Knowledge and Virtue; and he adds "that it had been a continued series of unwearied kindness to the Indians, that he had at length entirely overcome their jealousies and suspicions, and gain'd an almost universal disposition in them to receive instruction."

He then inform'd Mr. Hollis "that he has in his mind for some years, to set up a free boarding-school for the education of Indian children, in which he proposes that they be brought up to labour as well as learning and the exercises of devotion; with which proposal the Indians seem to be mightily taken; being sensible of their folly in their being formerly so backward to improve the advantages put into their hands.

Upon all Mr. Sergeant adds his "Prayer, that Almighty Power

may effect the merciful purpose of sovereign Grace among them," and then concludes with a free and noble declaration to Mr. Hollis in the following words:

'Sir, as to your making any allowance to me for my care and trouble, of which you speak in your very obliging letter to me, I neither ask nor desire it, and beg of you not to think of it; for I should indeed be ashamed to accept anything of you (though my stated allowance is not large) but your intercessions at the Throne of Grace for me, of which I stand in great need. We can never be thankful enough to you, under God, for having put it in our power to do so much to promote our general design. Through your liberalities thanksgivings abound to God, who I am sure will reward your charity; and I doubt not but generations to come will bless your name and you will find your reward in Eternity.

JOHN SERGEANT.'

"I was so charm'd with the spirit and contents of this letter that I took a copy of it before I seal'd it up and forwarded it to Mr. Hollis; and not only so, but old as I am and unapt now to transcribe, yet I wrote several copies and sent one to an honourable member of the Corporation at London who have the distribution of the Indian Fund, another to the worthy Secretary of their honourable Commissioners here at Boston, and yet a third to a Rev. Minister in Scotland, if he sees good to communicate it to the Secretary of the Honourable Society for Propagating Christian Knowledge at Edinburgh; and after all I publish'd it in the Weekly Christian History at Boston, No. 19. So that I have in a manner prevented and abundantly answer'd, Mr. Sergeant's request to me in his present letter before it came, and gone beyond all he could imagine or expect from me in way of prefacing and recommending his pious design and proposal. And I can truly add that I shall account myself honour'd by God in my advanced age, if I may finish my course of services to my country and the churches of Christ here, by ministering now under my dear younger brother, in this his fervent devoting his life and power to the glory of God in the salvation of the Heathen.

I even dare therefore to recommend him and his proposed Boarding-School, not only to the pious and charitable among ourselves, nor only to those of the denomination of New England in our Nation and Provinces, but also (might it not be thought presumptuous) even to the most honourable Societies *for Propagating the Gospel* and of Christian Knowledge in London and Edinburgh for their generous assistance to a Projection truly

catholic and without respect of parties; which I hope the Divine Providence may be laying by the hands of his servants Mr. Hollis and Mr. Sergeant in this obscure corner of our Province at Stockbridge, *alias* Housatunnuk, for a more effectual Entrance among the Indians than we have yet seen.

But there are two or three things more that I find myself obliged to hint at before I conclude the present writing.

One is (as Mr. Sergeant requests of me in his letter) to intimate to the publick Mr. Hollis his expectations from us here in New England. And indeed in several of his letters to me he has wrote with some discouragement of spirit on this head: 'Why we, a people of such name for religion, do not exert ourselves more in prosecution of like Essays for a more effectual gospelizing the Heathen round about us? And now that he has advanc'd as he has done for the education of a number at Housatunnuk, he hears of none of our rich men falling in with their assistances.

This has been matter of stumbling to him, and I wish the block may be now removed by the contributions of many to the school proposed; which may be an odour of a sweet smell, a sacrifice acceptable and pleasing to God.

Another thing suggested by Mr. Sergeant, and a most wise and necessary one in the present case is, "his taking in Girls as well as Boys, if Providence succeed the Design, and a Fund sufficient to carry it on can be procured." I must needs add, on this head, that this proposal is a matter of absolute necessity, wherein we are not left at liberty either as men or Christians; for there cannot be a Propagation of religion among any people without an equal regard to both sexes; not only because females are alike precious souls, form'd for God and religion as much as the males, but also because the care for the souls of children in families, and more especially in those of low degree, lies chiefly upon the mothers for the first seven or eight years: which is an observation or remark which I had the honour to make to my dear and honour'd ancient friend Henry Newman, Esq., Secretary to the Honourable and Reverend Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge; which when he had communicated to them they put it into print and sent it to the Directors of the 1764 schools (if I have not miscounted) that so great a proportion of girls might be taken into them to receive a religious education for the sake of their posterity, and therein for the more effectual answering the very end of their Charity-Schools. By which instance I received the following instruction: 'What an unknown and untho't of good



a man may do by a single and occasional right tho't or line; it proving in the case before me as if I had wrote 1764 letters to the directors of so many schools for the service and posterity and in favour of female children.' And what added a thousand-fold more to the virtue and force of my Line was the approbation of so venerable a body of Gentlemen, and their recommendation of it to the observation of the overseers of their respective schools.

I have now only to add upon Mr. Sergeant's postscript—that the gentlemen whom he has nam'd to receive and disburse the moneys which may be given for the building and support of his Boarding-School are persons of known character among us for Integrity and Honour; to whom I only wish may be added the Rev. Mr. Stephen Williams of Springfield, whom it pleased God to use so much as a zealous and laborious instrument of the settlement of the Gospel at Housatunnuk.

Now thanks be to God for his unspeakable gift, a right liberal heart and hand in one part of his Church and another. No tongue of man can fully speak of it or enough celebrate it. Unspeakable is the good done to the world by it: unspeakable also is the glory redounding to the name of Christ from it, and also the good to ourselves in it and from it is unspeakable, both thro' the life that now is and in that which is to come. Only the day of Christ can reveal the glories and joys awaiting it thro' a blessed Eternity. 'Lord, when saw we hungry and fed thee, or thirsty and gave thee drink? Verily, inasmuch as you did it unto one of the least of these, ye have done it unto Me.'

BENJAMIN COLMAN."

The foregoing letter of Mr. Sergeant containing his Proposal, etc., and Dr. Colman's Return, etc., were made publick by the Doctor according to Mr. Sergeant's desire, with a design to excite the pious, generous and well-disposed in this country and in Great Britain to charitable contributions for the setting up and supporting the proposed Boarding School. And Dr. Colman distributed many of them when and where he tho't they would be most likely to answer the end proposed. And in a letter to Mr. Sergeant, September 17, he gives him the following account:

"I cover to you your letter in print. I wish my return of it may be acceptable to you and others, and I heartily beseech God to incline many hearts,

here and abroad, to contribute to your most pious and generous proposal. I have cover'd four of them to his excellency our Governor, and suggested to him my hopes that the General Court will smile upon it at their next session."

And in another letter of the 22d of the same month:

"It was a great pleasure to me yesterday to see Mr. Josiah Jones. I have deliver'd to him twenty pounds old tenor, to deliver to you for your further assistance and support in your work. I have desir'd him to call at our Deacon Philips's for two dozen copies of your letter to me and my return to it, presented by Major Henchman, who sends them to you for the copy. I have distributed already of them seventy, and shall receive fifty more to-day to distribute. I have already cover'd to Dr. Watts, Dr. Guise, Madam Holden, Mr. Newman, Mr. Oswald and Brackstone, booksellers, Dr. Avery, Mr. Hollis, and to Mr. Willison of Dundee, and am going to put up for Mr. Palmer, Mr. Coram, Dr. Wilson and others on the other side the water. I have also presented four to Governour Shirley and am sending to Lieutenant-Governour Phips and Dummer here, and to the Governour, Lieutenant Governour and some Ministers in Connecticut and to the presidents of our colleges, etc. I have cover'd to Mr. Speaker Cushing and for our three Representatives, and to Mr. Secretary Oliver and the Board of Commissioners for the Indians here, to the Ministers hereabout also."

By the pains Dr. Colman took in recommending and distributing Mr. Sergeant's Proposal it is evident he was much engag'd in favour of it, as Mr. Sergeant also was, and I think not without reason: for I look upon it as the best concerted scheme that has ever been propos'd for the benefit of the Indians. Nor do I suppose it likely that they will ever be bro't to be a knowing and thrifty people, unless by some such method of industry they are cured of their idleness, and other vices which proceed from it.

When Mr. Sergeant understood, by Dr. Colman's letter, what care and pains he had been at to forward this noble design, his generous soul was too tenderly touch'd to be silent. In a letter of October 24 he thus expresses his gratitude to the Doctor:

*"Reverend Sir,*

With a heart full of gratitude I write to let you know I have receiv'd the

packet of my printed Proposals, with your most obliging Return and recommendation of the Design; together with the twenty pounds of money by Mr. Jones. You heap your favours so fast upon me that it almost confounds me. I blush to be spoken of publickly with so much commendation by you, when I am conscious to myself I so little deserve it. May God give me grace to improve every talent to his glory, and make me an humble instrument in promoting the Kingdom of his dear Son among the heathen. Pray make Madam Holden and her excellent daughter as sensible as you can that I am deeply affected with their goodness, and return praise to God for their liberalities. I have it in my mind to write her a letter of thanks, if it would be acceptable. I am very thankful to you, Sir, both on my own and the Indians' behalf, that you have taken so much pains to recommend my Design. I pray God it may meet with acceptance in the world. I heartily consent that Mr. Williams should be added to the Trustees propos'd. He has deserv'd very highly of us; is a very active man and zealous to promote the good of the Indians."

In another letter of November 25th to Dr. Colman, Mr. Sergeant says:

"Your care and pains, under the decays and feebleness of age, to promote the Design of my letter, I accept with great thankfulness. Madam Holden is exceeding kind, and sets a noble example. May God put it into the hearts of others to follow it. I highly approve of the manner you propose to put forward a subscription for something annually, and yet not so confining it but that who will may give what they please at once. Yesterday<sup>1</sup> we of the English families with the assistance of two strangers happening to be present, being ten persons only that contributed, collected by subscription one hundred and fifteen pounds ten shillings towards our propos'd School: some to be paid annually for the term of ten years; an offering which I hope will be acceptable to him who gives us the comforts and blessings of life, with which we are able to rejoice and give thanks before him. Yesterday I also gave the Indians some account of the Design, with what was doing for them, chiefly by your means. They appear'd very thankful, and this morning sent a message to me, to know where the house was design'd to be erected, with the offer of their assistance in clearing a spot of land to forward the Design."

The letter which Dr. Colman wrote to Mr. Sergeant, giving

<sup>1</sup> A day of publick Thanksgiving through the Province.

him occasion to say "Madam Holden is exceeding kind and sets a noble example," is missing. Herein I conclude the Doctor had inform'd him that Madam Holden had given one hundred pounds towards his Boarding-school; for in his letter of May 18th (before transcrib'd) the Doctor says:

"I purpose to ask Mrs. Holden's leave to apply one hundred, our currency, of her money, toward your Boarding-School."

And in another letter of May 24th, 1744, he speaks of Madam Holden's subscription of one hundred pounds. I suppose therefore in the letter that is missing the Doctor inform'd him of her donation, which occasioned him to express himself as above.

For want of that letter I am not able to say what manner of subscription the Doctor put forward, and which Mr. Sergeant so highly approv'd of, but only from this expression of his: "for something annually, and not yet so confin'd but that who will may give what they please at once." And what progress it made I know not, but supposed it was not great. All the light I have in the case is a letter of Dr. Colman's to Mr. Sergeant, dated May 24th, 1744, in which he says:

"I have as yet no subscription but Madam Holden's one hundred pounds."

Then he goes on to name four gentlemen who subscrib'd in this country, and concludes by saying:

"I wish it may be slow and sure; believing and not making waste. God governs, and I trust will provide."

The four subscriptions above mentioned Mr. Sergeant never received. I find them not in his account, and therefore conclude that, the war now coming on and discouraging any further subscriptions, those were not paid.

It must be granted that the people in Stockbridge discover'd a very noble and generous spirit in contributing so largely to that pious design. Had the people thro' the country given one tenth



part so much in proportion to their number and abilities, that school, and another for females, might have been set up and well supported.

And had we in general, in this land, such just and affecting views of the deplorable state of the Indians as the people at Stockbridge have, whose eyes affect their hearts, I doubt not but many thousands would have cheerfully given to forward that noble and pious design, the best I think that has ever been projected.

Dr. Colman sent one of Mr. Sergeant's printed letters, and his own recommendation of it, to a gentleman in a neighbouring town, whose generous mind was pleas'd with the projection; he therefore wrote back, proposing a method of subscription to encourage it, which the Doctor approv'd of, and therefore published the gentleman's letter in the *Weekly Journal* of February 7th, 1744. The letter, with what the Doctor subjoined in the publick print, were as follows:

*"Reverend and Dear Sir:*

You did me the favour, some weeks since, to send me the Rev. Mr. Sergeant's Scheme, with your letter annexed to it, for promoting Christian knowledge among the Indians at Housatunnuk, by civilizing and bringing them to a good opinion of industry, frugality, &c., which I very much approve of; and the more because it appears to me as if he had truly no private or personal interest in view, but only the honour of his great Master, and the best welfare of the poor heathen, whom the Father gave him for his inheritance. And therefore I heartily wish it success, and hope the difficulties in raising money to carry on such an affair may be surmounted.

I have been expecting every day since you sent it to me, to hear of a subscription's going forward on that account, but hear nothing of any such thing at present.

I would therefore humbly propose that a sheet of paper or two may be stitch'd up at the end of one or more of those printed letters; and a generous subscription begun by a few well-dispos'd Gentlemen of Boston, and handed about from one to another to try what may be done that way. And there

every subscriber may see at one view the honest design, judge of its necessity, and act accordingly.

I cannot help thinking the generous benefactions of the Rev. Mr. Hollis, and his just objection of the inactivity of a people of such a name for religion as we in New England, in such an affair, will put many to the blush, and perhaps spur them on to bountiful liberality in this scheme. I am no ways qualify'd for a leader myself, but would willingly follow a few gentlemen who would be more likely to give it a reputation and currency, with my subscription of ——— pounds, and would use my small influence to promote it; but it must be somehow or other set agoing, which when once well done may be easily kept alive and in motion. I have a great deal of faith that something of this nature may be attended with success, if put into such hands as shall be spirited for it and will not be weary in well doing but stir up themselves and others with a well-tempered zeal, mixt with prudence, so as not to give offence to any who do not think exactly as they do; and by such a behaviour some who may not be well inclin'd at one time may be very well dispos'd at another, to a handsome subscription.

But this method notwithstanding, I hope it will not be tho't amiss to have a Brief from Authority (if need be) procur'd and promoted in every church in this Province, to collect what well-dispos'd people would be willing to give to encourage an affair of such importance; and if, before the collection, these two letters should be read, I am humbly of opinion it would not be impertinent.

If we really believe the admirable chances you mention at the close of your letter have any reality in them, as I am apt to think they have, viz: That a right liberal heart and hand, no tongue can fully speak it, nor enough celebrate it! Unspeakable is the good done to the world by it, unspeakable is that glory redounding to the name of Christ from it; and also the good to ourselves in it and from it is unspeakable, both thro' the life which now is and that which is to come! Only the day of Christ can reveal the glories and joys awaiting it thro' a blessed Eternity.

I say, if these wonderful truths are duly tho't of, this pious scheme of Mr. Sergeant will not, cannot, fall to the ground for want of money to carry it on and support it from time to time. I intreat an interest in your prayers, and do assure you that I am, with great esteem and respect

Sir,

Your very much oblig'd humble servant.

January 26th, 1744.

N. B. I think it my duty to make the most publick excuse for the freedom I take with my honourable friend in publishing his letter, excellent as it is in itself, without his leave; and also to inform him and the publick, that a book will be ready at my house and at the shops of Major Henchman, Capt. John Phillips and Mr. Joseph Edwards, with blank leaves annex'd, for taking in subscriptions. Or if it be desir'd by persons in other towns any where thro' the Province, that like books be sent to them for the same end, they shall be sent.

BENJAMIN COLMAN."

Dr. Colman wrote to the honourable Commissioners upon the same subject; of which he gave Mr. Sergeant the following account in a letter of February 9, 1743-4:

"To-day I wrote to Andrew Oliver, Esq., Secretary to the Commissioners for the Indians, to be communicated to them, inclosing to them your and my printed letter, and these now inclos'd (the foregoing letter publish'd two days before, and now inclos'd to Mr. Sergeant) praying them to take your Proposal into consideration, and act as they may see becoming them in their publick and private capacity."

It will perhaps be matter of surprize to the reader, that when such an opportunity presented, and subscriptions were urg'd by such forcible reasons by Dr. Colman and the author of the foregoing letter, that no subscriptions were obtain'd in the country, save those four above-mentioned; for I find no account of any more in the papers before me. All the reason I am able to give for it is, that the war with France now came on, which drew the attention of everyone, and might discourage for the present those who were well inclin'd; Stockbridge being an expos'd place, where no such design could be carried on in time of war, to good advantage.

I am sensible some worthy gentlemen, who were possest of a laudable concern for the good of the Indians apprehended that, there was too great a coldness and indifference in this case, considering the importance of the affair, and the happy prospect there was of its succeeding if it had been duly encourag'd; and that they

were a little impatient on the account of those excuses which were made by some, from whom subscriptions were expected, viz: that we must not be too hasty, etc.

One gentleman in a letter to Dr. Colman of May 18th expresses himself thus:

“I am sorry the propos’d draught for a subscription is so hard of digestion; I wish gentlemen would not be quite so over nice and exact, but leave some of the prudentials in the affair to the honourable and Reverend gentlemen who I hope will be appointed, and who will be charitably inclin’d to take upon them the management of that affair.”

A gentleman also in a letter to Mr. Sergeant of July 9th, says:

“I could have been very glad that my poor endeavours with respect to your Scheme to propagate Christianity among the Indians had been attended with any success; but I cannot learn that anything is done, or doing, about it; and it seems to me to be as dead at present as if it had never been in motion. I have met with several checks for being too hasty in the affair. Our backwardness to generous actions for the good of our fellow creatures, notwithstanding the excellent rules of charity prescrib’d in Christianity and enforc’d by so many powerful reasons, is a most convincing argument that the spirit of pure and undefil’d religion but little prevails where the form of it appears.”

I am ready to think that anyone who is well acquainted with this affair and is impartial in the case, will judge that a generous subscription to promote such a noble design would have well become a people of our Profession. The Rev. and generous Mr. Hollis, when he was made acquainted with Mr. Sergeant’s scheme, discover’d a very different spirit from what appear’d among us. Before Mr. Sergeant’s letter, and Dr. Colman’s recommendation of it were made publick in this country, in April 7, 1743, Mr. Sergeant, in a letter to Mr. Hollis, inform’d him of his design of setting up a Boarding-school. Mr. Hollis, in his answer of December 5th, 1743, in a most effectual manner shews his approbation of it, in the following words:



"I am pleas'd with your proposal about setting up a Boarding School for Indian children. I like it well. May it please the Lord to incline the hearts of many to contribute towards it. I desire you would take up for me twelve boys afresh, about the age of 9, 10, 11 or 12 years, and let them be totally maintain'd at my expence, with food and raiment, education and the like. There may be still a considerable sum of money in the hands of Colonel Wendell; please to apply to him on my account for what you want, and I will furnish more as there may be occasion for it.

N. B. I would have none but boys educated for me; but it may be well if a number of girls could be educated on the account of some others."

Dr. Colman in a letter inform'd a certain gentleman in his neighbourhood of Mr. Hollis's generosity, who in his answer to the Doctor expresses himself thus:

"This extraordinary additional bounty of that reverend gentleman I hope will quicken the gentlemen here concern'd in putting forward subscriptions. Is it not amazing to find one single gentleman (and that a stranger too) so ready and free to be at the expence of supporting 24 boys without any jealousy of his charity's being misapply'd, and this whole Land so backward to support an equal number of girls, when it is so vastly more our Duty than any body's else? May not a little impatience here be a virtue?"

To Mr. Hollis's letter of December 5, 1743, Mr. Sergeant wrote an answer July 2, in which, after his grateful acknowledgment of Mr. Hollis's generosity, and his hearty wishes that a full reward might be given him by that God who is well pleas'd with such sacrifices, he informs him that the projected method of a boarding-school was the best he could devise for the good of the Indians—and then adds:

"The war with France falls out unhappily for this Design. We are situated upon the borders of the Massachusetts Province, open to the French settlements, and in the road where the French and Indians us'd to make their irruptions; but have been hitherto, thro' the goodness of God, preserv'd. However, for the present, I believe, it will not be tho't prudent to be at any expence in the affair of the Boarding-School. My house is garrison'd; a number of soldiers are sent into the town, and provisions are scarce; so that I know not what can be done for your boys just now. We are for the

present in such confusion and uncertainty, by reason of the War, that it is difficult to say what is best to be done; a little longer time will probably direct us what steps are best to be taken. As soon as may be I shall gladly prosecute your pious Design."

In a letter also to Dr. Colman of June 29th, he says:

"As for our Design here I believe it will not be tho't prudent to put anything in execution for the present, till we see a little how the affair of the war will turn."

Thus ceas'd this important affair of the Boarding-School for the present, and nothing more was here done about it till the year 1747. But in the meantime some things were acted in favour of it in England, by some generous and publick-spirited persons to whom Dr. Colman had sent Mr. Sergeant's printed letter and his own Return or recommendation of it; of which I shall give some account in its proper place, only observing here that it was a grief to Mr. Sergeant that he could not now proceed in it; but hop'd for a more favourable opportunity. In a letter to Dr. Colman of November 7th he expresses himself thus:

"It will be a great grief to me if we should not be able to accomplish the Design I have projected. To God's power and grace I refer it."

This projection of a Boarding School, and the pains Mr. Sergeant was at to promote it, took up a considerable part of his time and thoughts; for it lay very near his heart: but at the same time he prosecuted his work among the Indians with industry and faithfulness—and a very hard service he had of it. For, having a mix'd auditory, he was obliged on each part of every Lord's Day both to pray and preach in the English and Indian language, that all might profit by his ministry. He himself esteem'd his work to be double on this account, and us'd it as one argument with the honourable Commissioners to move them to make some addition to his salary, which was very small. His words are: "My Labour, by being oblig'd to preach in Indian, I suppose is double to what

it would be if my hearers understood English.” And I apprehend it was more than double—for he wrote every word he delivered to the Indians (as he further takes notice in that letter) and that he might be very exact he did, for a considerable time, keep an interpreter by him two days in a week, at his own cost, to assist him in the translation of his sermons into the Indian tongue. And besides, the Indians being very ignorant, and not able to gain knowledge by reading, as those who can read may do, he was oblig’d to spend much of his time in conversing privately with them, that thereby he might infuse knowledge into their minds; which having been so long as an uncultivated soil, wanted more abundant labour. He was indeed a rare instance of Diligence, Industry and Painfulness in his work; and the pains he took for the good of the poor natives are not to be express’d.

In the close of this year Dr. Colman again refresh’d his spirit by sending him a small sum. “Please, Sir,” (says the Doctor in a letter of November 17th) “to accept the ten pounds enclos’d for you”—for which Mr. Sergeant return’d his grateful acknowledgments in a letter of December 11:

“I have receiv’d your most obliging letter, and the ten pounds inclos’d, which I accept with great thankfulness. I return praise to God in the first place, as the original author of every good thing, and in the next place to you, who have been made, under him, the instrument of many kindnesses to me. You have my fervent prayers in return, springing from a heart deeply sensible of the kindness of God to me by your beneficence. May the smiles and joy of God to you be the recompence of those repeated favours with which you have so often refres’d my bowels.”

As Mr. Sergeant was laborious and faithful in the work to which he was call’d, so there is good reason to conclude that he was successful therein, not only from the increase of knowledge and a visible reformation among the Indians, but also from the temper of mind some of them discover’d at the time of their death, some instances of which I have given above, and shall here add two or

three more, by suggesting a few hints concerning some young persons who died this year, and the beginning of the next. The very brief account which Mr. Sergeant, in his *Journal*, gives of them is as follows:

“May 22 died a young person, not baptised, but expressing a serious disposition of mind. He was much in prayer in his sickness; deaf, and not able to speak much; but just before he died took his father by the hand, exhorted him to mind religion, to get baptised; said he hoped for happiness, spake these things plain, and then died.

January 19, 1745-6: This week died Katharine, Kunkapot’s eldest daughter, with good hope of future happiness and without any fears of death. Feb. 16. This week died Kewaunnoahkuh, daughter of Naunavnekennuk with a strong hope of Eternal life.”

What a desirable sight was it to behold such young persons, who a little before were strangers to divine things, leaving the world with such a comfortable hope of a glorious immortality!

The honourable Corporation for Indian Affairs, in London, to whom Dr. Colman had sent Mr. Sergeant’s letter and his own recommendation of it, received it—and their Treasurer, in a letter to the honourable Andrew Oliver, Esq., secretary to their honourable Commissioners in Boston, inform’d him that Mr. Sergeant’s proposal had gain’d the approbation of the Society in London; that they were inclin’d to contribute to it; and that when there should be a prospect of its taking effect they would consider the matter and encourage it as they conveniently could. This letter Mr. Oliver communicated to Mr. Sergeant, who wrote to the honourable Corporation, informing them that the affair of the Boarding-school had been delay’d by reason of the war; that the founding of it would cost a considerable sum, tho’ he hop’d it might afterwards be carried on with but little charge; that upon a computation made it was tho’t that two hundred pounds Sterling would be needful; that he purpos’d to proceed in that affair as far as present circumstances would admit; and concluded by humbly recommend-



ing it to the favourable notice and encouragement of that honourable Corporation. But I find not, among his papers, any answer to this letter, nor any account of money advanced by the Corporation for that business—and therefore suppose nothing was done by them while Mr. Sergeant liv'd. Perhaps his letter, in time of war, might fail of reaching the Corporation.

Another of those proposals for a Boarding-School was sent to Dr. Watts; the effect of which Dr. Colman inform'd Mr. Sergeant of in a letter of May 21:

"I am now, dear sir," (says the Doctor) "to inform you that last night I receiv'd a letter from Dr. Watts, dated March 26, wherein he says to me: 'I have your letter from Mr. Sergeant, and have made a small collection among a few friends for his Design and pious work in the education of some of the neighbouring Indians: and now I inclose a Bill of Exchange to you for seventy pounds your currency, from Mr. Henry Caswell of Boston, Merchant.' So he salutes Mr. Sergeant, and wishes him success. I rejoice with you, Sir, in this first fruit." And in a letter of June 10 the Doctor says: "I lately inform'd you of a Bill for seventy pounds our Currency, from the excellent Dr. Watts of London. The money is in my Scriptore, wrote upon from him to you. I shall be glad to forward a letter of thanks from you to him." Accordingly Mr. Sergeant in his next letter to Dr. Colman says: "I have inclos'd a letter, such as it is, for Dr. Watts; be pleas'd to forward it to him with as much safety as you can and as soon as may be." Of this letter to Dr. Watts, and of many others which Mr. Sergeant wrote to one and another, I find no copies, which lays me under no small disadvantage in my endeavours to give a good account of these things.

Captain Thomas Coram of London, a gentleman who has discover'd a generous and noble spirit in divers projections for the benefit of the nation and for the good of mankind, in some of which he happily succeeded, receiv'd from Dr. Colman Mr. Sergeant's proposal for a Boarding-School. When he had read the scheme he was very much pleas'd with it; and in a letter dated London, January 23, he gave the Doctor thanks for the book<sup>1</sup> and assur'd him that he had taken no small pains to promote that good work, and that he entertain'd hopes that the Prince of Wales would encourage that pious Design by becoming the first subscriber.

<sup>1</sup> Mr. Sergeant's printed letter and Dr. Colman's Recommendation make a small book.

Of this Dr. Colman inform'd Mr. Sergeant in a letter of May 7, which much reviv'd his hopes respecting his Boarding-school; and in his answer of May 29 he says to the Doctor:

"Mr. Coram has shewn an excellent and most generous spirit in the matter, for which I thank God, and desire you, when you write to him again, to give him my most hearty thanks for the pains he has taken in this affair, which I hope will add to the weight and glory of that crown of righteousness which waits for him when he has finished the work design'd him by Providence. And if he succeeds in this it may perhaps appear worthy to be the last service of so industrious a labourer for the good of others. If the Prince of Wales leads in the subscription, it looks probable that it may secure the success of that Design I have so earnestly desir'd to see accomplished. I am waiting to put something in execution among the pious and liberal in our own country, when the face of things in divine Providence shall appear encouraging."

Capt. Coram was so charm'd (to use his own expression) with Mr. Sergeant's undertaking, that he exerted himself abundantly to promote it. He first got a book bound and a proper preamble writ in it for benefactors to subscribe to, for the benefit of Mr. Sergeant's school. Then he applied to some wealthy persons, both in city and country. And tho' he found many who expressed their willingness to encourage so good a Design by their contributions, yet he could find no person who was willing his name should stand first in the subscription; but all chose to subscribe after it was well begun by some proper person. These objections put this generous gentleman upon the tho't of preferring a petition to his Royal Highness the Prince of Wales, that he would honour and encourage this noble Design by placing his name at the head of the subscription. He therefore prepar'd the following petition for that end:

TO HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS THE PRINCE OF WALES

The humble petition of Thomas Coram, Gentleman, most humbly sheweth:

That in the reigns of King William and Queen Anne your petitioner

transacted affairs of Commerce in His Majesty's Plantations in North America, where he resided many years and constantly endeavoured to promote the honour of the Crown and the good of the Publick; some of which endeavours were crowned with success, to the lasting benefit of this Kingdom.

That during his residence in these parts he observ'd with attention that many advantages that might and ought to have been long since secured there, greatly for the honour of the Crown and the benefit of His Majesty's Kingdoms, have hitherto been grossly obstructed or neglected; particularly that of gaining over the many tribes of the heathen Indian natives, in the vast wilderness behind the British settlements in New England, to the interest of the British Nation and to the knowledge and love of Christianity; who, if well treated and properly instructed by fit persons residing continually among them, would be effectually attacht to the British interest in all future times, and prove of vast service to the Crown, especially in time of war with France, whose Missionaries constantly reside among their neighbouring tribes of Indians near the French settlements in Canada, and, instructing them in the French interest, render them very useful to the French in their wars and as injurious to the British subjects in the said Plantations.

That Mr. John Sergeant, a gentleman of great Probity, Piety and Learning, settled at Housatunnuk, one of the furthestmost out parts of the British habitations in New England, on the borders of said wilderness, being deeply touched with compassion for the miserable state of ignorance and heathenism of those many tribes of poor Indians, and duly sensible of the truth of the premises, has form'd an Excellent Scheme for the Education of a number of those Indian children in such manner as may by degrees raise them into the condition of a civil and industrious people, and introduce the English language among them instead of their own barbarous jargon, and instruct them in the principles of religion and Vertue; and will himself and family constantly reside among them and apply his time and best endeavours for the most effectual carrying the same into execution—whereby, in a course of years, a way may by God's blessing, be opened for the propagation of Christianity to the remotest of their tribes.

That this noble Design cannot, in its nature, be carried forward without considerable expence; the furnishing whereof depends, under God, on the charitable contributions of well-disposed people; and many worthy persons of both sexes, in and near London, have declared their intentions to contribute liberally towards carrying on and supporting thereof, when a subscription and collection for it shall be properly begun.

And forasmuch as this undertaking would be greatly encouraged by your

Royal Highness's graciously vouchsafing to become the first subscriber and contributor thereto, and many of His Majesty's good subjects be induced to give the more liberally:

May it therefore please your Royal Highness to take the premises into consideration, and graciously condescend to become the first subscriber and Contributor to the same.

*And your Petitioner shall ever Pray, &c.*

T. C.

This petition, with a letter and the subscription book Capt. Coram sent to Col. John Shute, Privy Purse to His Royal Highness, with whom he was well acquainted, who was then about twenty miles from London, desiring him to lay them before the Prince of Wales; but his circumstances would not then admit of his going to the Prince. The Colonel therefore sent the letter, petition and subscription book to the Rev. Dr. Ayscough, Clerk of the Closet and first Chaplain to his Royal Highness, desiring him to solicit the Prince to become the first subscriber. The Doctor had no sooner laid these things before his Royal Highness but he declared himself ready and free to encourage so good and laudable a design, placed his name at the head of the subscription, and gave twenty guineas for the encouragement of the Boarding-School, which was paid to Mr. Coram. Dr. Ayscough also let him know that he himself designed to make a present of a Bible to the congregation at Stockbridge, which he soon after did; one of the largest sort, finely gilt, bound up in three Vol., large Folio, which now adorns the pulpit at Stockbridge and is made use of for the benefit of the congregation every Lord's Day.

While these things were doing Capt. Coram tho't himself oblig'd to let Dr. Ayscough know that this Mr. Sergeant was a Dissenting Minister, and not of the Church of England. The Doctor reply'd "What if he be a Dissenter—he is a good man, and that is everything. It is time those distinctions should be laid aside, and not make them where there is none, and the partition wall thrown



down, that Christians might love one another; that he lov'd all good men alike, let them be Churchmen or Dissenters."

A noble, generous and catholick spirit the Doctor herein discover'd; and were all ministers, of every denomination, of such an excellent temper, we should soon all join hands to remove the partition wall which has so long divided and weakened the Church of Christ, and unite in cultivating and establishing that love and unity the Gospel of Christ so abundantly recommends to us, and which is both the Strength and Beauty of the Christian Church. The Doctor also wrote a very kind and obliging letter to Mr. Sergeant, which if it prove as grateful to the reader as it was to him and is to me, I shall think my time well spent in transcribing:

*"Reverend Sir:*

I have perused, with great satisfaction, your letter to Dr. Colman concerning your proposal of a more effectual method of converting the Indians in your neighbourhood to Christianity. I likewise had such an account of your good intentions and abilities from Mr. Belcher, Mr. Coram and some other of your friends, that I could not forbear writing to you, both to shew my approbation of your design and to assure you of my encouraging and assisting it to the utmost of my power. I have recommended it to my Royal Master the Prince of Wales, who with his usual goodness has contributed towards it; and you may depend upon my promoting it with all the zeal that so pious and useful an undertaking requires and deserves. Pray God give you success in it. But whatever the event of your labours may be, you may be sure of the reward of them from that good Being from whom only, I dare say, you expect it. Pray God bless and prosper you and as many (let them be of whatsoever denomination) who love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity.

I am, good Sir,

Your affectionate Brother and humble Servant,

FRANCIS AYS COUGH.

London, May 20, 1746."

Capt. Coram, having succeeded so well with the Prince, in the next place apply'd to the Duke of Cumberland, by the Right Hon.

Mr. Points, desiring he would contribute ten guineas. The Duke generously reply'd "It would be shameful to give so small a sum to so good a purpose," and subscrib'd twenty. The Lord Chancellor, the Duke of Dorset and the Lord Gower gave each five guineas. And here, so far as I can learn, this well-begun subscription ended; which every one who reads the foregoing account will be surpriz'd at, unless I relate the occasion of it: otherwise I should have pass'd it over in silence:

A certain gentleman in London, and a lady of his acquaintance (which lady Capt. Coram had before apply'd to to become the first subscriber) had inform'd the Captain that when the subscription was well begun they would contribute to that good design. He therefore now wrote to the gentleman, acquainted him with the success he had met with, sent him a copy of the above petition to the Prince, and inform'd him that he design'd to wait upon the lady for her subscription. The gentleman sent back the petition to Mr. Coram, and wrote to him, letting him know that "his conduct had been such that neither the lady nor he would have anything more to say to him." This treatment gave the good gentleman such a disgust that he proceeded no farther; and in a letter of May 10 he says to Mr. Sergeant: "I really believe I should have got ten times as much as I have, if I had not been prevented by that unhandsome usage."

What a pity is it that a subscription to encourage such a pious and noble design, that had so good a lead and such a fair prospect of succeeding, should be put by because of the ill-usage one or two persons offered to the generous promoter of it! Would not one have tho't that seeing that gentleman and lady fail'd, there was the more need of applying to others, who had given encouragement that they would smile upon the affair by their free contributions? And is it not more than probable that the example of His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales, of the Duke of Cumberland his brother, and also of the noble persons who had subscribed would have in-

duced many to free and liberal contributions to such an excellent and pious design?

What Capt. Coram collected he sent to Mr. Wallis of Boston, by whom it came to Mr. Sergeant's hand. He wrote also a very large letter dated London, May 10, in which he inform'd Mr. Sergeant of his proceeding, in all the foregoing steps, which Mr. Sergeant receiv'd January, 1747; where I find in his *Journal* these short hints:

"Received letters from London informing of a benefaction for the Indians' School—went to Boston to take care of it. The Prince of Wales subscrib'd Twenty Guineas."

A grateful sense of Dr. Ayscough's generosity, kindness and condescension obliged Mr. Sergeant to write to him without delay. The copy of his letter bears date January 24, 1746-7, and is as follows:

"*Reverend Sir:*

With great satisfaction and much gratitude I receiv'd your most obliging favour of May 20, 1746, assuring me of your approving of my design, published in my letter to Dr. Colman, and of your readiness to promote it to the utmost of your power. I am extremely oblig'd to that good gentleman Mr. Coram, for making you acquainted with it, and to you for recommending it to His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales; and think it my duty to return you my most hearty thanks for this instance of your goodness; and am very glad of this advantage put into my hands to promote a spirit of loyalty in the Indians to His Majesty, whose subjects they now readily profess themselves to be; and there is no doubt but such instances of Royal Bounty, well improv'd, will have a good effect to attach the Indians to the British interest. Your own gift to our Congregation I thankfully accept, both as an instance of your goodness, and piety. As it ever has been, so it will, I trust still be, my zealous endeavour to communicate to this poor people the pure doctrines of God, and the words of eternal life as they are contain'd in the holy Scriptures; ever praying that they may be made wise to salvation by them.

I am much oblig'd to my friends that they have recommended me in so advantageous a manner, to gentlemen of so distinguished and high stations as yours; and yet I cannot, without reluctance receive their compliments. To be

sure, Dr. Colman has spoken too highly of me, and I wish some things he has said had been suppressed. Mr. Belcher was ever exceeding kind to me, and highly deserv'd of the Indians, having taken great pains while he was in the Chair of this Government, to promote Christianity among them, and to engage them in the British Interest: and it is a great pleasure to me that he has not forgot his former kindness. To his pious zeal to promote this interest I attribute his kind partiality towards me.

This Design I look upon to be of great importance, and am greatly encouraged in the undertaking, in that it has obtain'd the approbation and good influence of a gentleman of your character and station, which give you so much advantage to promote it. I have written largely to Mr. Coram, who will gladly embrace an opportunity to communicate to you what I have written to him.

It is with great satisfaction I observe the goodness, the candour and pious disposition of your mind, which certainly must be approv'd by that good Being who is the Father of the universe, and the great Saviour of the World who has given himself a ransom for all. May his Kingdom be enlarged and the fullness of the Gentiles brought into his holy Church. I have had large experience of the truth of his gracious promises, and esteem your kind and condescending notice of me as an instance of the fulfillment of his promise to them that deny themselves for his and the Gospel's sake. May he graciously consider this instance of your kindness as an act of charity done to himself, when he shall come to judge the world, bringing his rewards with him. How happy would it be for the British Nation if the Ministers of religion of every denomination were endow'd with the same candour and pious disposition! Then our unhappy party distinctions would be soon forgotten. May the same divine temper, by your happy influence, diffuse itself among all orders, promoted by the example of a Prince of so many amiable virtues as adorn his Royal Highness the Prince of Wales. Excuse me, Sir, that I hope you will favour me with your future correspondence, which I shall esteem a great honour done to

Reverend Sir

Your obliged

Humble servant,

JOHN SERGEANT.

To the  
Rev. Dr. Ayscough,  
Clerk of the Closet  
to his Royal Highness  
the Prince of Wales, &c."



He also wrote a very large letter to Capt. Coram, dated Jan. 22, in which he gives a considerable account of his mission to the Indians, and of his success in that business. It will therefore doubtless be grateful to the reader to be entertain'd with the whole of it:

*"Sir:*

Your most obliging letter of May 10, 1746, containing an account of your generous endeavours to promote the Design of my publick proposal for the Indians, I have just now receiv'd, together with the invoice of the particulars you have sent to the care of Mr. Wallis in Boston. By Dr. Colman's favour I was before, in some measure, acquainted with your zeal, your generous concern and pains for us; which gave me great satisfaction and mov'd both my thanksgivings to God and prayers for you. But your letter containing an account of your labours in this affair gives me such an opinion of your goodness as exceeds what I could readily have imagined. It is a great pleasure to me that you seem to be mov'd with so generous a spirit, and so much above the narrow and niggardly conceptions of bigots; which temper is as great an abhorrence to my mind as it can be to yours. And I am sure the pleasure you take in such generous labours for mankind must be as much above the little satisfaction of bigots in promoting their own party schemes, as the temper with which you are actuated is preferable to theirs. And your reward with God will be in proportion to the excellency of that charity that moves you, in your generous labours for us. Nothing, to be sure, could have been better design'd than to get those great persons you applied to to honour the Design with their subscriptions. And that it has been favour'd in our excellent Royal family is by me esteem'd an additional obligation of duty to endeavour to promote a spirit of loyalty in the Indians, as far as my influence now or at any time hereafter may reach.

It is now a little more than eleven years since I was first settled in this part of the country, with a design to proselyte the Indians to the Christian Faith. Having spent part of the foregoing year with them, in two visits I made them, I found such encouragement as induced me to devote myself to this service; and have now, with a great deal of pains, gain'd such an acquaintance with their barbarous language as to converse with them in it, and with a little assistance in my study, from an interpreter, to preach to them and to read prayers which I have composed for the publick worship, which they attend as constantly as people generally do in English Assemblies. Their language is extreamly hard to learn, and perhaps I shall never be a thoro' master of it, there never having been any European that ever

was, except one or two, and they learn'd it when they were children. But the young people among them learn English well, and some are able to write. When I came into these parts first they were much dispersed, four or five families in a place and often moving from place to place. They are now gathered together at this place, and are much more fixed than they used to be. Instead of their bark hutts they own seventeen English houses, fifteen of which they have built themselves at their own cost, and some of which are comfortably furnished with household stuff. There were in this place but eight or ten families when I first came: we now reckon near fifty, besides old people and transient young persons. The families indeed are but small, as is common among the natives. Near half that are born die in infancy or childhood, which I attribute to their manner of living, and want of suitable medicines in time of sickness. The grown people abundantly die with consumptions, begun with violent colds. The most of the settled families in our neighbourhood are gathered to this place, and the greater part of them have received baptism. Our number increases from time to time by the addition of new families especially of those who are kindly dispos'd to Christianity. It is probable we should have had more of them before now, if there had not come some Moravian preachers among some of them near to us. I do not pretend to so much acquaintance with that sort of people as to pass any positive judgment about them; the converts they have made are, I think, enthusiastick and bigoted. They have rendered themselves so much suspected in the Governments of New York and Connecticut that they would not tolerate them within their bounds. They refused to take the oath of allegiance to King George, or even the Quakers' Solemn Declaration. What was the meaning of this I cannot tell. They drew off a number of Indians from these parts, and some from this place to Pennsylvania. We have of Indians in regular standing in the church thirty-five, thirteen males and twenty-two females, besides five or six under a temporary suspension from the Communion, some of which I hope may be recovered to repentance. Out of our communion have died eight or nine, most of whom seem to me to have left the world with a good Christian temper and with a well-grounded hope, besides some younger persons I could not but hope well of. The success I have had, thro' the divine blessing, has been tho't as great as has attended any late attempt of this kind—and yet I have nothing to boast of, but have reason to be humbled, that my labours have been so much blasted. I am sure nothing affects me with more grief than to observe the little fruit of my labours. Some of those who have appear'd the most promising converts have to my great grief and

sometimes even to my astonishment, strangely fallen away—which has almost wholly discouraged my further attempts. The truth is, the Indians are perhaps as fickle and irresolute in their determinations as any people in the world; and when they seem to be wholly recovered from their vice, easily relapse into their foolish and wicked national habits. I speak of the tribe to which I minister, and suppose the same temper generally prevails among all the American Indians. Their great national and fundamental vices are Idleness and Drunkenness, which are a great obstruction to the propagation of Christianity among them with any due and lasting effect. Besides, there is an almost universal jealousy spread among the tribes of Indians, and a suspicion of the English. This, I am sure, is in a great measure the effect of French policy, and the work of their Missionaries.

I cannot think of any method more likely to conquer these difficulties, and to lay the foundation for the larger spreading of the Gospel, or attaching the Indians to the British interest, than what I have publickly propos'd. If it pleased God to give it effect, it may in time be a means of a great deal of good—and yet I dare not promise myself suddenly any extraordinary success from it. I see no way that will, in human probability, correct so successfully their national habits, as this I have proposed. It is not easy for those who are not acquainted with barbarous nations, to conceive into what a degree of barbarity they are sunk, nor how difficult it is to recover them. A great deal has been done for our Indians. To their honour, our Government has done much; but yet, so jealous were they at the first, that they could hardly be persuaded to accept the kindnesses that were offer'd them, and some they actually refused. We are now got over this difficulty, which has been a vast hindrance to our Design.

Our situation here is the best, to lay such a foundation, of any in New England. By the favour of the Government we have a good township of land, capable of maintaining three times the number of inhabitants that we have; and I believe it might be in time replenished with that number, by this means. And if we could persuade a number of young people from the several remote tribes, to receive an education here, they might be a means of propagating Christian Knowledge and Vertue very far among their tribes. And there is ground to hope we might obtain this, by the influence of two English missionaries in the Western Parts: I mean Mr. Barclay, a worthy gentleman and my particular friend, missionary to the Mohawks, who received his Orders from the Bishop of London and is maintained by the Society for propagating the Gospel, &c., but as he is Chaplain at the same time in the King's Garrison at Albany, and oblig'd to spend half his time there,



forty miles distant from them, and has no Established Schoolmaster or Catechist, labours under great disadvantages. The other gentleman I mean is Mr. Brainard,<sup>1</sup> a zealous and well-dispos'd young man, some account of whom you have in a pamphlet which accompanies this. In a word, Sir, I think the Design of a school, in the manner I have projected, is of very great importance, not to say absolutely necessary, in order to the effectual propagation of the Christian religion among them; and unless this people are beyond all other under a curse from Heaven, this would probably do it; for, except their complection, I see nothing in this people but that they may be cultivated into as agreeable a people as any other. They are naturally ingenious and good tempered as other people, and many of the little children very pretty and agreeable; and seem to want nothing but a right cultivation to form their minds and manners into every laudable quality and action human nature is capable of. If I can be the instrument in the hand of Providence to lay such a foundation as this, it would be a great satisfaction to my mind; and I hope generations to come will have occasion to remember my name with gratitude.

I am sure the Design is good—and it seems to me as necessary as it is good; for indeed, without this method of instruction and cultivation of their children our labour seems to be in great measure vain. I cannot but hope it may be effected, notwithstanding the discouragements it has hitherto met with. I believe there might have been some considerable subscriptions made in this country, had not the war prevented. When it shall please God to put an end to this distressing calamity, I shall use my utmost endeavours, with the assistance of good and well-dispos'd gentlemen, to put the matter forward.

I am, &c.,

JOHN SERGEANT.

To Capt. Thomas Coram of London."

These two letters from Mr. Sergeant I am apprehensive never reach'd the gentlemen to whom they were directed; for, September 24, 1747, Mr. Sergeant notes in his *Journal*, that he had then receiv'd a letter from Mr. Wallis of Boston, informing him that Capt. Coram had receiv'd no letter from him, and was a little out of temper upon that account. And then adds: "I immediately laid

<sup>1</sup> Probably the celebrated David Brainerd, the Indian missionary (1718-47), who died not long after Mr. Sergeant wrote.



aside all other business and wrote to Dr. Ayscough and Mr. Coram." Yea, I suspect that even this second letter he now wrote to Dr. Ayscough fail'd by the way; for in a second letter which the Doctor wrote to Mr. Sergeant, dated December 9, 1748, he informs him that he had received his letter of July 22, 1748, but makes no mention of any of an earlier date. He also says to him that he was glad the congregation of Stockbridge had receiv'd the Bible he sent; which seems to intimate that the first information he had of their receiving it was by Mr. Sergeant's letter of July 22, 1748; whereas Mr. Sergeant in his letter of January 24, 1746-7, inform'd the Doctor of the receipt of it, and return'd him thanks for it. I have before taken notice that as soon as Mr. Hollis was made acquainted with Mr. Sergeant's design of a Boarding-School, he directly ordered twelve more boys to be taken in upon that Foundation, and educated wholly at his cost. But by reason of the war, which much affected them of Stockbridge, his orders were not put in execution, and the whole affair of the Boarding-School was defer'd till a more favourable opportunity. Mr. Hollis, being inform'd of this, wrote this year to Dr. Colman, insisting upon it that twelve boys should, without any further delay, be taken and educated at his charge; and those passages of Mr. Hollis's letter which related to that affair Dr. Colman transcrib'd to Mr. Sergeant. In a letter of May 7 the Doctor writes:

*"Reverend and Dear Sir:*

Yesterday I receiv'd a letter from our honoured friend Mr. Hollis, who says: 'If my money lie by till the War ends it may be a long time indeed. Do you see the least prospect in the world of it? Would you not wish to see the Redeemer's work carried on while you live? I am not willing to have my money of three hundred and fifty pounds your currency lying by useless till the war is ended. And I do hereby appoint that there be, as soon as possible, twelve more heathen boys taken on my account, to be entirely provided for with lodging and maintenance, to be instructed in the Christian Doctrine. And after I know of this order's being comply'd with, I design to make a large remittance for further carrying on the work.' Thus far Mr. Hollis, from High Wycomb, Jan. 27, 1746-7."

The Doctor goes on:

*"Dear Sir:*

You will please to communicate this to the honourable gentlemen the Committee, to whom I paid in your presence last year, Mr. Hollis's three hundred and fifty pounds our currency, and all the other moneys in my hand, and to advise with them. I am sure you and they can best tell what can and must be done. I have wrote myself to Mr. Hollis to-day, wherein I let him know of this my present writing to you, and I hope you will, as soon as may be, write to Mr. Hollis, whose good and generous soul is enough to animate us all."

Who the Committee were into whose hands Dr. Colman paid Mr. Hollis's money, and the other money that was in his hand, I shall have occasion to show by and by.

In another letter also he transcribes a passage from Mr. Hollis, and this being the last written by Dr. Colman to Mr. Sergeant, four days before his death, I shall transcribe so much of it as relates to Mr. Sergeant and to the affairs of Stockbridge:

"BOSTON, August 25, 1747.

*"Reverend and Dear Sir:*

With a sick and faint breast and a trembling hand, I now write you (as it seems to me) my last; but with a reviving pleasure, on a new letter yesterday receiv'd from the Rev. Mr. Hollis, our pious and generous friend, repeating to me the same things which he had before wrote. 'I request (says he) that the three hundred pounds in your hands of my money may be employ'd in the education of twelve new boys of heathen parents, with all convenient speed. Yea, I absolutely insist upon it, and promise herewith to make a remittance for further charge of education and maintenance; my estate being very much increas'd, having had a great deal left me by a relative deceased. Please to inform me how it has gone with the lads instructed at my expence some time ago. If some prove naughty, others may come to good. As to the war with France, let not that hinder the education of children at my expence. I request it may be done speedily, if there be Indian parents willing to have their children educated.' (Dr. Colman proceeds): 'Yesterday, in the evening, our worthy and good friend Mr. Wallis of Boston call'd in upon me, and read me a very good and most encouraging letter from his good Uncle Coram of London, respecting his further progress at Court

respecting *Nova Schola* (a new school) in general: and also of further benefits to your town and the support of religion and education at Housatunnuk.

I was rejoic'd to see Mr. Wallis, and think Providence has chosen a very good hand in him, and that he will naturally, and with fidelity, minister between his Uncle and you. I entreated him forthwith to serve you with a copy of his Uncle's letter; and I forward this to him to come therewith.

When I took my pen in hand I fear'd I should not have been able to write at all. My Son, the Lord be with thee, and prosper thou when I am dead. May his holy pleasure prosper in thy gracious heart and hand, which he has sanctified to serve his gracious purpose. I intend this hour, God willing, to write to Mr. Coram, thank and encourage him, and the Lord reward him. It seems to be the last <sup>1</sup> from

Reverend and dear sir,

Your unworthy sinful brother,

BENJAMIN COLMAN."

Upon this letter of the Doctor's Mr. Sergeant wrote: "My last indeed from this good man, whose soul is gone to rest in the Lord." May I be suffer'd to add: A rare instance indeed of a good man's dying, as it were, with his pen in his hand, labouring to promote the good of his Country, the prosperity of his Friends, and the eternal salvation of precious Souls! And who of all his brethren, the sons of New England, has he left behind him, who so tenderly loves, so ardently cares for, and so vigorously endeavours to promote the good of his native country as Dr. Colman did? But I am stepping beside my line, and must return.

If Mr. Wallis sent a copy of Mr. Coram's letter to Mr. Sergeant, as the Doctor desir'd, it is not to be found; therefore what is meant by *further benefits to Stockbridge*, and by the *support of religion and education at Housatunnuk*, spoken of in the Doctor's letter above, I am not able to say; but by a *new school* I conclude is included a Female Boarding-School, which Mr. Coram then and since used endeavours to promote.

<sup>1</sup> He died August 29, 1747.

Things relating to the Boarding-School now appearing with a favourable aspect, and Mr. Hollis urging very hard that his twelve boys might be, without any further delay, taken upon that Foundation, Mr. Sergeant now entertain'd serious tho'ts of prosecuting that Design in the manner he had propos'd. He therefore, in the first place mov'd the Indians of Stockbridge, who are the proprietors of the undivided lands in that township, to give two hundred acres of land to build a School House upon, and to be cultivated by the children who should receive their education there. The Indians chearfully comply'd with the Motion, and gave two hundred acres of very good land, about a mile from the meeting-house, for that purpose. The manner and time of their giving of it I am not acquainted with, but the fact is well known.

About the middle of July Mr. Sergeant set out on a journey to Boston, in order to forward this important affair. He went by the way of Northampton, Hatfield and Hadley, that he might confer with those gentlemen whom he had nominated in the postscript of his letter to Dr. Colman of August 1, 1743, to be a Committee or Trustees, to receive and disburse the money which might be given to promote that good design, and who had exprest their willingness to take that trouble upon them, viz: the honourable John Stoddard, Eleazer Porter, Israel Williams and Oliver Partridge, Esqs., and the Rev. Mr. Edwards. These are the honourable gentlemen, the Committee, of whom Dr. Colman speaks in his letter of May 7, above transcrib'd, to whom the Doctor paid, in Mr. Sergeant's presence, Mr. Hollis's three hundred and fifty pounds, and the other moneys which were in his hand. By the other money I suppose he means Madam Holden's one hundred pounds and Dr. Watts's seventy pounds, which he had received for the encouraging the Boarding-School.

Those gentlemen Mr. Sergeant desired would meet at Colonel Porter's of Hadley, on the 20th of July that he might there confer



with them and take their advice and direction upon the business before him. Col. Stoddard and Mr. Edwards came not to the meeting, and wholly declin'd having anything more to do in that affair. The other gentlemen, Col. Porter, Col. Williams and Col. Partridge, met, before whom Mr. Sergeant laid open the affair with what clearness he could, and they advis'd him to proceed in it. These gentlemen also propos'd to be made a Body Politick to act in that business, and advis'd Mr. Sergeant to endeavour to accomplish that matter and to desire the assistance of Mr. Hutchinson and Mr. Oliver in it. When Mr. Sergeant came to Boston he confer'd with those gentlemen upon the subject, who tho't it not best that the fore-named gentlemen should be incorporated, but rather that the matter should be put into the hands of the London Corporation, and transacted by their Commissioners here. The Commissioners themselves were also of the same mind; and finally neither the one nor the other was done, but the whole care of the affair devolv'd on Mr. Sergeant; who resolv'd, with what speed he could, to erect a building for and to proceed to, the education of the Indian children, more especially those for whose education Mr. Hollis stood engag'd; and from Boston he wrote to Mr. Hollis informing him of the steps he had taken, and that he design'd to proceed in that affair as fast as he could. Of this letter I find no copy, but only a minute in Mr. Sergeant's *Journal*, that he thus wrote to him. September 25 he again wrote to Mr. Hollis, and by his answer the reader may give some guess what was contain'd in Mr. Sergeant's letter. Mr. Hollis's answer is dated from

High-Wycomb in Buckinghamshire

July 22, 1748

*"Reverend Sir:*

I received some time since a letter of yours dated Sept. 25. I know not the cause why it was so long before it came to hand. I do not find that my order for the maintenance, cloathing and instruction of twelve more heathen boys has been comply'd with as yet. If it has not yet been effected,

pray let it be done out of hand, *viz*: twelve boys of heathen parents; such as are not professors of Christianity, but children of heathen parents. As to my money, which according to what Dr. Colman wrote me I suppose might amount to £340 or £350 New England currency, be pleas'd to let the gentlemen know that I am not willing that it should be laid up as a Fund: I would have it expended in the education and maintenance of the twelve fresh boys for my account; and I design to make a further remittance for the defraying further expence. In your next be pleas'd to let me know how much of my money may be still remaining."

Mr. Hollis continuing to urge that twelve boys might, out of hand, be supported and educated at his expence, and the war continuing, which forbid its being done with any convenience at Stockbridge, Mr. Sergeant determined to provide them a suitable Master, and to send them abroad. He therefore went to Capt. Martin Kellogg, a gentleman of Newington in Connecticut, with whom he prevail'd to take the twelve boys for one year, and to instruct them both in learning and in hard labour. The Indians, when it was propos'd to them, consented that their children should go. Of this affair Mr. Sergeant gives us these short hints in his *Journal*: "March 13, 1747-8, propos'd to the Indians to send their children with Capt. Kellogg to Newington: they consented. April 12 chose the boys. May 23 Mr. Hollis's twelve boys went off to Newington."

Of these doings Mr. Sergeant (I conclude) gave Mr. Hollis an account in a letter, for in his next and last to Mr. Sergeant, dated London, October 5, he says:

"I have a letter from you wherein you mentioned concerning the Indian boys. Pray let me know if you receiv'd of the gentleman for my account £350 New England currency, and in what manner it may have been disbursed. If expended let me have account. I have inclos'd a Bill of £114 New York currency, value £60 sterling. Please to be very particular in your answer to this. Pray let the gentleman that has the care of the boys be desired to pray with them every morning and every night, and before and after every meal, and that he endeavour to instill into their minds principles of piety and godliness."

Feb. 17 Mr. Sergeant writes:

"During this winter, met the Indians once a week, to confer with them. Communicated Mr. Brainard's *Journal*<sup>1</sup> to them."

Mr. Woodbridge, Schoolmaster at Stockbridge, in a letter to me soon after Mr. Sergeant's death, gives a more particular account of these meetings in the following words:

"In the winter season it was his common practice to meet the Indians once a week in the evening for religious exercises. In these I very often accompanied him; and when sometimes he could not attend he would desire me to serve in his stead. These exercises seem'd to have a good effect, by begetting in the minds of the Indians a seriousness about the things of religion; and in the summer season he commonly spent an hour after publick service in instructions, exhortations and Christian advice."

This was a very proper and necessary method to be used with that people, who had not the advantage of increasing in knowledge by reading, as others have; and by those means a good degree of knowledge and understanding in the principles of religion was instil'd into their minds by their faithful and laborious teacher. Feb. 21 (he says): "The young people meet Lord's Day evenings for religious exercises, prayer, singing, &c. This they did of their own accord." This seems to show that the minds of the young people were imprest with religious sentiments, and that they delighted to draw near to God.

What sum of money Mr. Sergeant had in hand or at command, to enable him to erect a suitable building for the Boarding School, upon the lands given by the Indians for that end, I am not able to say; but he now resolved to use what he had for that purpose, and endeavored to procure more.

<sup>1</sup> David Brainerd (1718-1747), the celebrated missionary to the Stockbridge and New Jersey Indians. From 1743 to 1744 he labored at Kaunameek, twenty miles from Stockbridge, then persuaded his people to remove to Stockbridge, to the care of Mr. Sergeant. His journals under the titles of "*Mirabilia Dei apud Indicos*" and "*Divine Grace Displayed*," appeared in 1746, and a third edition in 1884.

He wrote to the Rev. Mr. Andrew Eliot<sup>1</sup> of Boston, desiring him to put forward a subscription there. That gentleman, who was a very hearty friend to the cause, propos'd a method that was likely to have succeeded had it been put in execution: but there arose so many objections against the present execution of Mr. Sergeant's scheme that Mr. Eliot was discouraged, and nothing was done then. He wrote also to the Rev. Mr. Williams of Lebanon<sup>2</sup> upon the same subject, who communicated his letter to the Rev. Mr. Eliot, Minister of the second parish in that place, call'd *Goshen*. And in a letter of May 7, Mr. Williams inform'd Mr. Sergeant that at Goshen they had gathered by contribution, on the day of general fasting in Connecticut, about twelve pounds, and that his congregation, on the same day, contributed to that good design between thirty and forty pounds, which waited his order. I find, by an account from Stockbridge, that the exact sum contributed at Lebanon was forty-nine pounds, one shilling. About the same time, if I mistake not, died Mr. Elery of Hartford in Connecticut, who left by will to the Indians of Stockbridge one hundred and twenty pounds. Mr. Sergeant also wrote the following letter to the Hon. Society for Propagating Christian Knowledge, in Scotland, desiring assistance from them:

"STOCKBRIDGE, IN NEW ENGLAND, March 8, 1749.

*Sir:*

Some years are now past since a proposal for the more effectual education of the Indian children, and the further spreading of Christian Knowl-

<sup>1</sup> Andrew Eliot (1718-1778), pastor of the New North Church (1742-1778). He declined the presidency of Harvard in 1773. He was greatly interested in the conversion of the Indians.

<sup>2</sup> Solomon Williams (1700-1776), one of the celebrated clerical family who have before been noticed in this work, was pastor of the church in Lebanon, Conn., from 1722 until his death, and was a very influential member of his profession. He had a notable controversy with Jonathan Edwards, the elder, in 1751, on a theological topic. His son William was the "Signer."



edge and Piety among their several Tribes, written in a letter to the late Reverend and pious Dr. Colman of Boston was published, with his recommendation of the Design. Several copies of the proposal were dispers'd, not only in these parts but also in Great Britain, particularly by the means of that worthy and excellent Gentleman, and if I mistake not he transmitted some copies to your honourable Society.

The Execution of that design has been much hindered and delay'd by the war we have been engaged in with France; but as there is now a prospect of peace, I hope that design may by the blessing of God take effect. A private gentleman in England sets a noble and generous example, which if it be follow'd as it deserves will, it is to be hoped, soon carry the design so forward as to answer some of the great and good ends propos'd. That pious and charitable gentleman proposes, at his own cost, to cloath, maintain and educate twelve boys. The design I think so good and so necessary, considering the gross ignorance and barbarity of our Indian tribes, that I would not be wanting in anything in my power to forward it. And since your honourable Society has shown so laudable a zeal to propagate Christian knowledge and piety among the poor barbarous aborigines of America, I tho't it proper humbly but yet earnestly, to recommend it to your charitable notice. If it comes within the limits of your province I cannot think your charity can be better bestow'd.

The projected School is design'd much in the manner of the Charity Schools in Ireland, which we are told have had wonderful good effects: and why may not the same methods of Education us'd here by the blessing of the same gracious God have the like good Effects?

By sufficient experience I have found that more effectual methods of education than what have yet been us'd, especially in respect of Manners and Industry in Business, are highly necessary for this barbarous, uncultivated people.

I would gladly have in the projected School all the more useful and important parts of learning that serve in common life, and that some, at least, may be fitted there for an *Academical* Education and so be qualified to instruct others; that in time, by the blessing of God, the Kingdom of Christ may spread more successfully far and wide, by their means, among the remoter Tribes. One would hope this might be done, and answer at the same time both a religious and a political view. Certainly if from us learning and good manners could be propagated among them, it would be a means of en-

gaging them more firmly in the British interest; but if with learning and good manners true Religion might take place among them, then they would become the subjects of the King of Heaven, and be joined to the number of Christ's redeemed; which must be the wish and earnest-desire of every sincere Christian.

The liberal gentleman I had reference to confines his charity to boys, and these, heathen. I do not blame his intention, but yet equal care, I think, should be taken of females; and Christian children need the advantage of such education as well as heathen.

I hope this good design will gain the approbation of your honourable Society, and that they will be able to contribute towards it; at least I doubt not but they will forgive me the freedom I have us'd in making this application for that purpose. The School is already begun, and we have had twelve boys upon the projected plan of education now almost a year. An house is in building for their reception, and will be fit for that purpose, I hope, in a few months.

May our gracious God direct and succour your and all other pious endeavours to enlarge the kingdom of our glorious Redeemer; which is the earnest prayer of

Sir,

Your most humble servant,

JOHN SERGEANT.

To the  
President for the time  
of the Hon. Society, &c."

I suppose either that this letter fail'd of reaching the Society to which it was directed, or that they did not see cause to do anything in favor of the Boarding School; for I find not any answer to it, nor do I remember ever to have heard of their doing anything to promote it. Seeing that Society desired a correspondence with Mr. Sergeant, and that he would begin it by giving them an account of what progress religion had made among the Indians at Stockbridge, which he did; and seeing he now wrote to them as above, it is somewhat strange that he never received a line from them. The most probable conjecture I can make in the

case is that either his writing to them, or their returns, fail'd by the way.<sup>1</sup> It appears in the foregoing letter that Mr. Sergeant had now erected a building for the Boarding School, and that it was like to be fit in a few months for the reception of the scholars. And while he was, with much pains and industry, prosecuting that good and pious design which was attended with some discouragements, his spirit was refresh'd by the reception of the following most kind and obliging letter from the Rev. Dr. Ayscough:

"LITTLE STREET, NEAR LEICESTER FIELDS, December 9, 1748.

*Reverend Sir:*

I receiv'd last week the favour of yours dated July 22, 1748, and am glad to hear that your congregation are at last in possession of the Bible: pray God bless it to them, and under the direction of so faithful and pious an expositor make it the means of grace and of salvation to them. I still continue my ardent wishes for the success of the truly Christian and apostolick Design you are engaged in; and I think the method you are in, for the educating young Indians in the knowledge of the truth, the most effectual one that can be taken. Pray God give you success; but whether that follows or not, your endeavours for it cannot fail of a reward. I often think of your pains and of your merit, and I look upon myself as nothing in comparison of you, who have devoted yourself to a most hazardous and laborious life in order to introduce the knowledge of the Gospel among the heathen nations. I must not only consider you as a good Christian, but also as a useful and good subject, since every convert you make must be look'd upon as a new subject brought over to the British interest. And truly the infinite pains that are taken by the French (who seldom come behind us in civil policy) to make papists of the Indians should teach us to use some endeavours to make Protestants of them. With this sense of your merit, and the usefulness and piety of your undertaking you may be sure I think myself bound to do my utmost to promote it. I wish therefore, in your next

<sup>1</sup> In reading this and others of Mr. Hopkins' dry comments on the indifference of so many persons from whom Mr. Sergeant solicited help for the project to which he was devoting his life, it is impossible to resist the conclusion that, however unworldly Mr. Sergeant was, his biographer had a keen sense of the stinginess of these people, and his semi-apologetic remarks are really, in the language of our great humorist, "writ sarcastic."

you would give me a full and particular account of the Scheme you are pursuing; that you would let me know the situation and condition of the place where you are settled, and of the country round it; what progress you have made; what number and of what sort of persons your congregation consists, and the state of the school lately set up for the Indian children, and whether you have any salary or certain appointment for your labours, or not. When I am supply'd with these materials you may depend on my soliciting in the strongest manner, and doing the utmost in my power to encourage and support so pious an undertaking. I recommend you to the Divine Providence; I desire your prayers for me and all belonging to me—and be assured, Sir, it is with the highest satisfaction and sincerity that I subscribe myself

Your affectionate Brother and humble servant,

FRANCIS AYS COUGH."

Mr. Sergeant receiv'd this letter but a little while before his death, and if I mistake not I have been inform'd that he had not opportunity to return an answer to it. For the satisfaction, therefore, of those into whose hands this history may fall, and who want to be informed in the things after which Dr. Ayscough inquires; and for the satisfaction of the Doctor himself, if it should ever reach him, I shall briefly touch upon what has not been sufficiently illustrated in the foregoing account.

As for the scheme which Mr. Sergeant was pursuing: some account was given of it in his letter of August 1, 1743, to Dr. Colman, to which it may not be amiss here to add: that his design was that the Indian boys, under the care of a faithful Master, who should labour with and inspect them, should subdue and cultivate the two hundred acres of land upon which they live: that they should raise upon it all sorts of provisions: that they should keep upon the farm a stock of cattle, sheep, hogs, etc., that the girls should be employ'd in manufacturing the wool, flax, milk, etc., that should be rais'd upon it; they, also, being under the care of a faithful Mistress, who should instruct them in all sorts of business suitable to their sex. By this means they might,



after some time, in great measure if not wholly, support themselves; be form'd to industry; be acquainted with the English language and manners; and be fit, at about twenty years of age, to set upon farms of their own. By taking the Indian children when young, and bringing them up in the way of industry (as well as learning) Mr. Sergeant design'd to cure them of idleness which they are much addicted to, and which is a seed plot of all manner of vice among the Indians.

As to the situation of the place where Mr. Sergeant settled: I observ'd before that Housatunnuk is in the S. W. corner of the Massachusetts Province, [a]butting upon Connecticut Colony South and upon New York Government West: for tho' by charter the Massachusetts Province extends west to the South Sea, and must therefore butt upon the Gulf of California near the north part of it, yet the Dutch being previously settled upon Hudson's River, cut this Province in two, and at present we inhabit no further west than to the Dutch settlements. Stockbridge lies at the north end of what goes by the name of Housatunnuk, about sixteen or eighteen miles north of Connecticut line, upon a stream which goes by the name of Housatunnuk River, and empties itself into the sea between Milford and Stratford in Connecticut Colony. This river, tho' it be navigable for eight or ten miles from the mouth of it and extends itself [a]cross the Colony of Connecticut and almost cross the Province of the Massachusetts, more than a hundred and twenty miles into <sup>1</sup> land, yet it is not laid down in any of the maps which I have seen of this country.

The place of this river at Stockbridge is about forty or forty-five miles west of Connecticut River, and about twenty-five or thirty miles east of Hudson's River. Its course at Housatunnuk is from north to south, and after it enters Connecticut Colony it bears considerably to the east of south until it falls into the ocean at Stratford.

<sup>1</sup> Inland.

Northampton, upon Connecticut River, is in or near the same parallel of latitude with Stockbridge, and Mr. Neal, in his history of New England has, in his map laid down Connecticut and Hudson's River, which in the latitude of Northampton and Stockbridge are about seventy to eighty miles asunder. Anyone, therefore, by looking into Mr. Neal's map and drawing a west line from Northampton, of forty or forty-five miles extent, may easily fix the place of Stockbridge.

As for the condition of the place: The foregoing history, with what may be further said, will perhaps be tho't sufficient—and as for the condition of the country round it: South upon Housatunnuk River it has lately been purchased of the Indians and is settled by inhabitants of this Province. The name of the town is Sheffield; it is divided into two parishes, in each of which there is a Minister settled. East of Stockbridge there is a wilderness of about forty miles extent, which reaches to the English settlements upon Connecticut River; it is mountainous, and loaded with immense quantities of timber of all sorts.<sup>1</sup> West is a wood of about twenty miles extent, reaching to the Dutch settlements in New York Government; and North lies that great and terrible wilderness of several hundred miles extent, which reaches to Canada.

What progress Mr. Sergeant made, may, I hope, in some good measure be judged of by the whole account I have here given. And with respect to the number of Mr. Sergeant's congregation, and of what sort of persons it consists: Mr. Woodbridge, a little after Mr. Sergeant's death wrote to me that there were fifty-three Indian houses in the town, that they own'd twenty houses built after the English mode, and that the whole number of Indians living at Stockbridge was then two hundred and eighteen; of

<sup>1</sup> In Stockbridge bounds and in the adjacent wilderness is found plenty of that famous East India Root Gin Sang. In the summer [of] 1751 it was first found.

which one hundred and twenty-five have been baptized. Of these forty-two were communicants, eighteen males and twenty-four females. The whole number of Indians baptised by Mr. Sergeant, both living and dead, was one hundred and eighty-two. The number of scholars belonging to Mr. Woodbridge's school was fifty-five; about forty is the number which attend school at once. There are also about twelve or thirteen English families dwelling there. As for the School lately set up for the Indian children (by which Dr. Ayscough intends the Boarding School, and not that under the care of Mr. Woodbridge:) I have before given an account of Mr. Sergeant's taking twelve Indian boys upon that Foundation and at Mr. Hollis's cost, and committing them to the care of Capt. Kellogg of Newington, for a year. Those boys made progress in reading and writing beyond the Captain's expectation, and in the general behav'd well. Sometime in the Winter Mr. Sergeant wrote to Capt. Kellogg, desiring him to come up to Stockbridge with them in April. The Captain did so, and upon examining the boys Mr. Sergeant was well pleas'd with the progress they had made in their learning. Mr. Sergeant now urg'd Mr. Kellogg to take the care of the boys one year at Stockbridge; to which he consented, and after instructing them a while in a private house he went with them into the Boarding School, which was now prepar'd for their reception, tho' far short of being finished. The dimensions of this Boarding School which Mr. Sergeant had erected are, thirty-eight feet long, thirty-six feet wide. It has three Fire rooms on one floor, and two convenient rooms besides, with a large cellar under it. Of these things Capt. Kellogg gave me an account in a letter soon after Mr. Sergeant's death. And this, so far as I understand it, was the state of that School when he died. His design was, this summer, if his life had been spar'd, was to have gone with Capt. Kellogg (who in his youth was twice taken captive by the Indians of Canada, and therefore had some acquaintance with the Mohawk language and cus-

toms) into the Mohawk Country, or to the Six Nations as they are call'd, to invite them to send their children to receive an education in the Boarding-School; and to have opened the doors of it to the children of any of the tribes of Indians who would send them there to be educated.

The last thing that Dr. Ayscough desir'd to be inform'd of is—Whether Mr. Sergeant had any salary or certain appointment for his labours, or not: Before Mr. Sergeant's Ordination he received from the Commission at the rate of £100 a year our currency. At his ordination they fix'd his salary at £150, when £1.7s 6d of our paper currency was equal to an ounce of silver. They continued it at £150 for the space of six years (as Mr. Woodbridge informs me) during which time our Paper Currency was near the same in value, it having depreciated no more than from £1.7s 6d to £1.9s an ounce. But continuing still to sink in its value, the Commission allow'd him £200 and then £250, and so it continued till the last year of his life, when they gave him £300; £2.17s 9d of our Paper Currency then not being more valuable than an ounce of silver.

If by those additions the sinking of money was made good (as I am sensible he tho't it was not) and his salary was equal in value to what it was at his first settlement, silver being the standard; yet if it be consider'd with relation to the necessaries of life, for which it was expended, his salary was not half so good the last year as it was the first: for wheat, when he settled at Stockbridge, was to be had for Eight shillings a bushel, and other provisions in proportion; but when his salary was £300 it was not to be had under forty or forty-five shillings a bushel, and other provisions were proportionably dear. The sum itself considered, everyone must be sensible that his salary was small, for it was but equal to £36.7s 3d our present Lawful Money, at 6s 8d the ounce; and no more than £27.6s 2d Sterling. And can it be tho't that he could support



himself and family with that sum, seeing all the necessaries of life were then and are still, very dear in that remote part of the country? Had it not been for the help he receiv'd from Dr. Colman's hand, and from other generous and well-dispos'd persons, he could not have subsisted at Stockbridge so long a time; and after all the help he had he was, while he liv'd, involv'd in many difficulties by reason of the scantiness of his support, and when he died he left his estate involv'd in a debt of between £700 and £800 New England Currency, even tho' he had sold some of it before to answer his necessary expences. A friend of his, who was well acquainted with his circumstances, in a letter to me written since his death, uses the following expressions:

"I should have mentioned to you the pressing want Mr. Sergeant has often been in, for want of a sufficient support in his laborious work. Had not a good Providence, in a surprising manner, provided and sent some assistance to him, it is not at all probable he would have left anything that could have been a benefit to his family. And had it not been for his singular prudence, and those helps, he must have sold most of what the Government gave him <sup>1</sup> long ago."

Thus I have endeavour'd to answer the Rev. Dr. Ayscough's enquiries, which, had Mr. Sergeant liv'd to have done he doubtless would have perform'd in a much better manner, and more to the satisfaction of those who want to be inform'd.

It would be a faulty omission should I neglect to say that when his Excellency Governour Belcher came into his government of New Jersey Mr. Sergeant wrote to him, congratulated him on that occasion, exprest his joy and satisfaction that he was appointed Governour of his native country, and returned him his most hearty thanks for the favourable mention his excellency had made of him in England, particularly to Dr. Ayscough and Mr. Coram. The Governour, yet retaining his former kindness and friendship for Mr. Sergeant, wrote in a most kind and obliging manner to him, assuring him of his readiness to serve him in what lay in his power,

<sup>1</sup> His Right of Land in Stockbridge.

and recommending to him the keeping up a careful and dutiful correspondence with Dr. Ayscough and Mr. Coram, gentlemen who were both willing and able to assist him in his laudable and pious undertaking.

The very great regard Dr. Ayscough had for, and his generosity to Mr. Sergeant, I know not how better to express than in the Doctor's own words, as they are contain'd in a passage of a letter which he wrote to his Excellency Governour Belcher, dated December 9, 1748, where, speaking of Mr. Sergeant he says:

"I most highly honour and regard that worthy Minister of the Gospel of Christ, and am proud to call him Brother. How much greater is his merit, and how much greater will be his future reward, than that of many of the most dignified and distinguished among us! You may be assured of my heartiest endeavours to promote the good design he is engaged in. I am in great hopes of being able to procure some pension to be settled on him, that he may have some little reward for his indefatigable labours, even in this life. In the meantime I should be glad to have the sum of twenty pounds advanc'd to him; but I am ignorant of the means of doing it. I can only say that if you or he will draw upon me for that sum I shall think myself bound to honour your Bill at sight."

A Bill was accordingly drawn, and the Doctor sent over twenty pounds sterling to Governour Belcher who in a letter of May 16, 1749 (about two months before Mr. Sergeant's death) inform'd him of the handsome remittance the Rev. Dr. Ayscough had made him, and tells him that he would pay the money to his order; which was accordingly done, either just before or a little after Mr. Sergeant's death.

I have here been the more exact, and have quoted Dr. Ayscough's own words, that I might effectually remove a mistake that some have gone into, who have tho't and said that the twenty pounds was misapply'd; that Dr. Ayscough design'd it for the Boarding School and not for Mr. Sergeant's own use.

Madam Sergeant, to satisfy others I suppose, rather than herself (for the case was plain to her) desir'd Governour Belcher's

sentiments upon that head, which he gave her in the following words:

*"Madam:*

I have deliberately consider'd the affair you have laid before me, and this day have had recourse to the Rev. Dr. Ayscough's letter of the 9th of Dec, 1748, and am of opinion that, by the tenour of it, the twenty pounds sterling I paid him (*i. e.*, Mr. Sergeant) by the said Doctor's order, was a Bounty intirely to himself, for an addition to his comfort and support, as an Evangelist to the Indians on Housatunnuk River.

Given under my hand at Elizabeth Town, in East New Jersey, June 29th, 1752. J. BELCHER."

While Mr. Sergeant was carefully and faithfully proceeding in his Ministerial labours, and with much pains, industry and application prosecuting that excellent, laudable and pious design of the Boarding-School (burdens perhaps too heavy for his constitution) purposing also in a little time to go into the Mohawk country to invite their children to it, he was taken ill of a slow or nervous fever, attended with Canker, which in a few weeks put an end to his precious life on July 27, 1749, in the thirty-ninth year of his age, and to all his generous, pious and noble tho'ts in favour of the poor natives, to some of whom he was, during his ministry, a great and rich blessing, an instrument in the hand of Christ of turning them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God.

To draw Mr. Sergeant's character I am sensible is a work to which I am not equal: but seeing it has not been attempted by anyone heretofore I shall endeavour to give the justest representation of him I can, by those helps I am furnished with:

THE CHARACTER, &c.,  
OF THE REVEREND  
MR. JOHN SERGEANT.

The Reverend Mr. John Sergeant was born at Newark in New Jersey, in the year 1710. His father died when he was but a

child, after which his mother was again married, to Col. John Cooper, a gentleman who not only prov'd a tender husband to her but also a kind and generous father to her children, having none of his own. Mr. Sergeant in his childhood receiv'd a wound by a scythe in the ball of his left hand, near the joint of his wrist, which so affected the sinews and nerves that his hand perish'd to that degree that it was much less than the other, and in great measure useless. This accident was the occasion of his leaving off the Secular business he was design'd for and of his betaking himself to learning; in which, being a person of a bright genius, he made great progress; whereupon his Father-in-law,<sup>1</sup> Col. Cooper, resolv'd to give him a liberal education. He entered Yale College, at New Haven, in the Colony of Connecticut, September 1725, where the comeliness of his person, the sweetness of his temper, the decency of his behaviour, the agreeableness of his conversation, the diligence with which he apply'd himself to and the progress he made in his studies, gain'd him the esteem not only of his companions but also of the Governours of the College. He proceeded Bachelor of Arts September 1729, and commenc'd Master 1732, before which he was elected Tutor of the College in which he had his education. In that post he continu'd four years, to the satisfaction of those who repos'd in him that trust, and to the advantage of those who were under his instruction. By this time he was determin'd for the work of the Ministry; and tho' he was well pleas'd with the business he was now in, and stood as fair as any man whatever for a Call and Settlement in any, even the best, parish that might become vacant, yet he prefer'd a Mission to the heathen: not from any views he could have of worldly advantage from thence, but from a pious, generous and ardent desire of being an instrument in the hand of God of good to the Indians, who were sunk below the dignity of human nature, and even to the lowest degrees of ignorance and barbarity.

There was something very uncommon, and which seems to have

<sup>1</sup> Stepfather.



been from above, in the disposition and inclination there was in him to this self-denying service; for before there was any prospect of his being employ'd among the Natives, his tender mind was so affected with the 'Tho'ts of their perishing state, that it had been his practice, for a long time to make it daily an article in his secret addresses to God that He would send him to the heathen, and make him an instrument in turning them from darkness to light, &c. God granted him that which he requested; for which he return'd his grateful acknowledgments to him who heareth prayer. And of these things he inform'd Mr. Woodbridge, his fellow labourer, at his first going to Housatunnuk; but strictly injoin'd him to keep them secret, which he accordingly did until since Mr. Sergeant's death.

He was a person to whom Nature prov'd lavish of her best gifts; or in words more agreeable to the Christian Scheme, God graciously bestow'd upon him excellent endowments, both of body and mind. In stature he was small, yet of a very exact and comely proportion, except his hand before mentioned; his hair dark, his eyes black and lively. He was ruddy, and withal of a beautiful countenance, and goodly to look to.<sup>1</sup> He was favour'd with a firm, healthy and good constitution, and therefore pass'd with the greater ease thro' the many difficulties and hardships that attended him in the course of his mission. He was of a most sweet, kind and benevolent natural temper, without the least constitutional turn towards gloominess, melancholy or jealousy; his conversation open, free, courteous, pleasant and very attractive; so that all who had the happiness to enjoy it were pleas'd and delighted by it. The powers of his mind were bright and strong; whence he was able to use close application and with ease made great progress in learning. Few of his years exceeded him.

His natural accomplishments were polish'd, enlarg'd and improv'd by a liberal education, and rendered him desirable and amiable to all, and very useful in his day.

<sup>1</sup> 1 Samuel, xvi:12.

True and undissembled piety gave lustre and beauty to all his other endowments, both natural and acquir'd, and prepar'd him to be eminently serviceable in the station God assign'd him. In his tender years he was of a very innocent turn of mind and of a blameless behaviour; free from those vanities and vices which young people too often indulge to, and careful to follow the ways of virtue; which might have inclin'd one to think that he was the subject of the Grace of God from the womb. But in his riper years, when he was at college, he was under those influences from above which he apprehended wrought a saving change in him and form'd him to the divine life. And what better evidence could he have that he was not mistaken, than what was consequent upon this change, viz: a temper and conversation becoming the Gospel of Christ, adorning the Christian profession he then made? Of this change, wrought by the spirit of God upon his heart, he very modestly and privately spake to some of his intimate friends, from whom I have my information. But I find not that he left one word in all his writings respecting his religious experience, devotion, &c., except one passage in a letter he wrote to a friend, by whom he seems to have been compel'd to boast himself a little, as the Apostle to the Gentiles was before him. The passage is this:

"With respect to my own Christian experience, I believe I could give you that account which would satisfy you in your own way of thinking; tho' 'tis now so long since I pass'd thro' that scene of Conviction, Humiliation and what I suppos'd was Conversion, that a great many particulars are now escap'd from my memory."

Some perhaps may blame Mr. Sergeant that he did not commit to writing those things which past over him at such a season, that he might have review'd them for his own comfort, and left them behind him for the benefit of others. It was owing to his very great modesty and humility, and to his care not to do anything that might be thought to savour of ostentation in religion (which is a thing very hurtful to its interest) that he kept those things to himself. And whether he did not by that modesty, hu-

mility and guard against ostentation give a clearer evidence of the truth of Religion in himself, and discover a greater concern for the honour and interest of religion in general, than he could have done by writing his own life, publishing his own experiences and proclaiming his own goodness, I leave others to determine.

His life also so abounded in the fruits of righteousness, and was so conform'd to the Gospel of Christ, that we have abundant reason to conclude the *Tree* was good, because the *fruit* was so.

He was very constant and frequent in the devotions of the closet, pouring out his soul to God in fervent addresses of prayer, praise, &c., which he found to be not in vain; for as he himself tho't, God graciously granted him frequent answers of prayer.

He was a devout worshiper of God in his family, fail'd not of morning and evening devotions; on which occasions he read, with great seriousness and solemnity of spirit, a portion of the holy Scriptures, generally making useful observations for the benefit of his family. He always read the New Testament out of the original Greek, with which he was well acquainted. With great solemnity and reverence he approached the Throne of grace and offer'd his devout addresses to God in the name of Jesus Christ the Mediator: thro' whose merits and mediation only, he hop'd for and expected the acceptance of his prayers and of his person. There were instances of his voice failing, and of his being oblig'd to make a pause in family prayer: the occasion of which was a lively sense and overbearing apprehension of the glorious perfections and incomprehensible excellencies of the divine Being, as he inform'd one who enquir'd into the reason of those interruptions.

He lov'd the house of God and his publick worship, greatly rejoic'd at the return of holy Sabbaths, enjoy'd much communion with God in his house, but in no part of divine worship so much as in the Communion of the Supper; in which he had such evident Communications of divine love, such assurance of the compleat

satisfaction of Christ, of the sufficiency of his atonement and of the prevalency of his intercession at the right hand of God, as almost transported him. These emotions were what attended him in his younger years, and were not very frequent. But as he advanc'd in years and in grace, he prefer'd the satisfaction which proceeds from the calm, rational exercise of rational piety and devotion, to those emotions of the mind. These things he never openly spake of nor would they ever have been known had not his most intimate friends, to whom he privately spake of them, made them known after his death. Thus he walked with God in devout exercises of a publick, private and secret nature, and enjoy'd much delight and satisfaction in so doing.

He was of a most tender conscience: endeavour'd to keep at the greatest distance from everything that savour'd of impiety, that cast contempt upon the authority of God, or that brought reproach upon religion; and us'd his best endeavours to *keep a conscience void of offence toward God and towards men.*<sup>1</sup>

He had a very great love to and the highest veneration for, the sacred oracles of God; esteem'd them infinitely preferable to the treasures of the world, and incomparably more valuable than the best human composure<sup>2</sup> and the study of them was his great delight. He view'd with astonishment and surprise the glorious methods of divine love and grace in the salvation of sinners by Jesus Christ, as discover'd in the Bible, that pure source of light. And while he form'd his own sentiments by the pure oracles of God, and followed the Way of Truth according to the best judgment he could make, he was of a most benevolent and charitable spirit toward those who differ'd from him. He lov'd Christians, of all denominations, who gave evidence of their love to Christ, much lamented the distance, alienation and bitterness that appear

<sup>1</sup> The Prayer Book, order of Family Evening Prayer.

<sup>2</sup> Compositions.



among Christians of different sentiments in lesser matters, and long'd to see them united in love and peace.

His catholick temper recommended him to the esteem of many—to Governour Belcher's in particular, who in a consolatory letter written to Mrs. Sergeant after his death, has this passage:

"Mr. Sergeant being now made free among the dead it can be no flattery to say he was a gentleman of uncommon piety and learning, and of great generosity and true compassion to the souls and bodies of men; and more especially to that poor benighted people God had committed to his care, and who before were perishing for lack of knowledge. God had, in a peculiar manner, adapted and adorned Mr. Sergeant with many suitable graces for moving in so difficult a sphere in the Church of God here, and for advancing the kingdom and interest of his Redeemer. His many social virtues, and particularly his catholick way of thinking for the better promoting of Christianity, justly and highly merited my esteem, and I had great pleasure in his acquaintance from first to last."

He was full of benevolent, kind and generous sentiments towards all mankind, which dispos'd him to do good to all as he had opportunity. He was a friend to everybody, wish'd well to all, and lov'd to think the best of all persons and of all parties of men. His noble and generous mind disdain'd a low, mean, unworthy action; and he always treated others, of all conditions, with great propriety. Strict and exact justice he made his rule in his dealings with all persons; yet rather than cause contention by insisting upon his own right, he chose to forego it. He was compassionate and tender-hearted to the afflicted; was liberal and bountiful to the poor, and devised liberal things both for their temporal and eternal good. He suffer'd not a hard, envious or ill-natur'd word to proceed out of his mouth, nor did he treat anyone, whether present or absent, with insolence or contempt. He was careful to speak evil of no man; and when he was injuriously treated and, as he feared, maliciously aspersed, by others, it did not raise in him heat and resentment, but rather pity and compassion to those who us'd him ill. He often said he could freely

forgive, as he expected to be forgiven of God; could heartily pray for those who had been abusive and injurious to him: and he earnestly recommended to others the duty of praying for enemies, as a happy expedient to promote a spirit of love, kindness and forgiveness towards them.

He had a most happy command of his passions, and maintain'd a constant calmness and sweetness of temper; was never melancholy, yet always serious; never fill'd with mirth, yet always chearful, bright and active; and seem'd always to have the quiet possession of himself.

I know not to whom the character of Nathanael may with more justice be apply'd, than to him: "Behold an Israelite indeed in whom is no guile." He was very distant from a designing, guileful spirit; and admir'd by those who were most acquainted with him, on the account of his singular integrity, sincerity and uprightness. He carefully and industriously improved his time, and could not (as he was wont to say) look back upon an hour lost, without uneasiness and guilt. It was his manner to rise early and as soon as the devotions of the morning were over he apply'd himself to study; in which, being favour'd with a firm constitution, he was able to bear great intenseness and application. The time he found needful for the relaxing of his mind, and for bodily exercise (both which were necessary to him) he spent in a manner which might best conduce to his own health, the benefit of his family or the service of those who were under his care; wisely and prudently endeavouring that the hours in which he refresh'd his labouring mind might be employ'd to some good and laudable purpose; gathering up the fragments of his time, that none of it might be lost. He was indeed an uncommon instance of labour and industry; and by close application he brought to pass a great deal in a little time; as all would be ready to grant could they be made sensible how much he did in the few years spent with the Indians; which I shall

endeavour to show, tho' it will be but in a faint and imperfect manner, in the following particulars:

1. He soon became sensible that the method he was at first oblig'd to use, of instructing the Indians by an interpreter, would not answer his end; for it was not only a very slow but also a very uncertain way of communicating to them things of the greatest importance. He himself was not able to know what was deliver'd to them by the interpreter, and had reason to fear that the truths which he endeavour'd to communicate were not well convey'd to their minds: for the best interpreters that could then be had did not well understand the principles of religion, nor the English terms in which Mr. Sergeant deliver'd them. He therefore tho't it absolutely necessary that he should learn the Indian language, that he might be more certain what was deliver'd to them, and make better progress in teaching of them. He therefore entered upon the new and difficult study of their tongue, and prosecuted it with utmost application. He found it upon trial extreamly difficult to learn, being entirely different from any language he was acquainted with; and often express'd his fears that he should never be able to make himself master of it. He also tho't it a more difficult task than it would have been to gain the knowledge of all the learned languages taught in the schools. However, in something less than three years he gain'd so much knowledge in it as to be able to pray with the Indians in their own tongue, and to preach to them in the same by the assistance of an interpreter who aided him in the translation of his sermons. And in about two years more, by constant use he obtain'd an exact pronunciation of their tongue, tho' very hard to gain; so that the Indians were wont to say "Our Minister speaks our language better than we ourselves can do." When Mr. Sergeant had, by a vast deal of labour, made himself master of this strange language, he found it to be a dry, barren and imperfect dialect, and by no means sufficient to convey to his

hearers the knowledge of divine things; for the Indians being utter strangers to religion, their language wanted terms expressive of divers things; he was oblig'd therefore to supply that defect by introducing English words, such as Jesus, Christ, &c., which in time by frequent use, the Indians well understood. By this help he so perfected their defective language as to render it tolerably sufficient for his purpose.

2. His ministerial labours were extreamly hard—more than double to those of other Ministers in ordinary cases. He was oblig'd to compose four sermons every week, two for the English and two for the Indians, his congregation consisting of both. Those he prepar'd for the Indians he first wrote at large in English, and then translated them into the Indian tongue, as he also did a portion of Scripture to be read to the Indians on the Sabbath; and notwithstanding he had so many sermons to make, they were well-studied, excellent discourses, shewing that he was 'a workman that needed not to be ashamed.'

He had a most laborious task to perform every Lord's Day. His manner was to begin the publick exercise in the morning with a short, pathetic prayer for a blessing on the Word, in both languages. Then he read a portion of Scripture, with explanatory notes and observations on such passages as seem'd most to need them, in both. All his publick prayers and the Communion service were in both languages, and it was his steady practice to preach four sermons every Lord's Day, two to the English and two to the Indians, except in the short days and cold season of the Winter he preach'd but three, one to the English and two to the Indians. And besides all this, it was his constant custom in the summer season, to spend about an hour with the Indians, after divine service was over in the afternoon; instructing, exhorting, warning and cautioning of them in a free, familiar and pathetic manner, in their own tongue. The Indian



language abounding in Gutturals, renders the pronunciation of it a most laborious exercise to the lungs; that, therefore, with his other exercises so exhausted Mr. Sergeant's spirits and strength that he was scarcely able to speak when they were over.

3. The Translation, which, with much care and exactness, Mr. Sergeant made in his course of reading the Scriptures to the Indians, singly consider'd, cost him a vast deal of Labour; for, endeavoring to lead them into the knowledge of the way of salvation by Christ, to which they were utter strangers, he, in his course of reading the Scriptures to them, translated those parts of the Old Testament which appear'd most needful for that end, viz: the account of the Creation, of the fall of our first parents, of God's calling Abraham, of his dealings with the patriarchs and the Children of Israel, of the prophecies concerning the coming of Christ, &c. The four Evangelists, the Acts of the Apostles and all the Epistles, he also translated—a performance which must of necessity [have] cost him much time and pains.

4. In his publick discourses likewise to the English of his auditory, he went thro' all the Epistles, with a labour'd and learned paraphrase, critical notes and useful observations; not by the help of Expositors, but by a careful examination of the original Greek, endeavouring from thence to gain the true sense and meaning of the authors of those Epistles. Mr. Woodbridge has given me some of his sentiments upon Mr. Sergeant's publick performances in the following words:

“I think it a great pity (says he) that such learned and well composed discourses should be of no further influence and benefit than they are like to prove by being delivered to a few people from the desk. There are a number of his sermons very worthy of the press, a collection of which would perhaps be as profitable as any discourses of such a nature that are extant; they being correct and written in a decent yet familiar stile. There appears in them not only his unshaken belief of the truths of the Gospel, but

also his good judgment and talent of conveying to others the importance and beauty of religion. They shew him to be an accurate reasoner by the conclusions drawn from the propositions of his sermons, and the force there is in them to convince every hearer, of the truth. His laboured and learned paraphrases, and critical notes on the Epistles would, I think, serve equal to, if not beyond, anything that has appear'd of that kind, to lead us into the Knowledge of the design and meaning of the authors. He wrote his comments with a single view, to discover the true spirit and genuine sense of those epistolary writings. There are two reasons which incline me to wish they may be made publick—the first is the apprehension I have of their being really serviceable to mankind: the other is that it might appear whether he was rightly, or groundlessly suspected of holding things contrary to sound doctrine.”

He also says, concerning his sermons in general:

“His people were not entertain'd with unconnected and undigested matter, but with excellent discourses.”

Such Productions, everyone will grant, must of necessity be the effect of much labour and study. It is very true Mr. Sergeant was no bigot, but of a most generous and catholick temper. Bigotry was what he had a great aversion to; and he was far from the rigid and narrow spirit those are of who confine Salvation to themselves, with those who think just as they do. It is a question with me whether his natural temper was capable of such severity; to be sure, as it was cultivated and improv'd by grace he was at a great distance from it. He tho't himself very ill-treated and much abus'd by those who represented him as being unsound in his principles, and so did those who were best acquainted with him.

But to return:

5. We must add to all his foregoing labours the daily and constant application he was oblig'd to use with the Indians; who, being very ignorant, very unstable in their virtue, and very much expos'd to temptations, wanted guarding on every side, which he fail'd not of doing.

6. The trust which Rev. Mr. Isaac Hollis repos'd in him added still more to Mr. Sergeant's labour and care; for it fell upon him to find the twelve boys whom Mr. Hollis generously offer'd to support, and to persuade them and their parents to accept the generous offer. The care also of providing a master to instruct them, and of victualling and cloathing of them, lay wholly upon him. In this trust he prov'd a faithful steward of Mr. Hollis's money; and as he had the whole care of laying it out, so he gave him an account of how every penny was expended, refusing to take any reward for his labour and trouble, tho' it was offer'd and urg'd by Mr. Hollis.

7. By the foregoing history it also appears that the important affair of the Boarding School, which lay very near his heart, employ'd much of his time and tho'ts, and was no small addition to his labour, especially in some of the last years of his life.

8. To all these we must add the unavoidable cares and concerns of private life, which were much increas'd by the scantiness of his support; which yet he conducted with singular wisdom, prudence and frugality.

View Mr. Sergeant in this light; consider him prosecuting such a variety of business and performing all in the manner above describ'd, and must we not grant that he was a surprising instance of labour, industry and faithfulness in that great and good work to which he was call'd?

Could I represent Mr. Sergeant in a true and just light, under the self-denials, hardships, troubles and difficulties which attended him in the course of his mission, it would appear not only that he past thro' many and great trials, but also that he bore them all with a fortitude and calmness of mind becoming the Christian and the Minister of Christ; tho' at times things appear'd with such a dark aspect that he was almost overborne with grief and discouragements.

Everyone must be sensible that to one of so delicate a make it must be difficult and self-denying to leave the College, that seat of learning and other delights, to dwell in a wilderness: to change the polite society he had been us'd to, for the conversation of a number of savages, the lowest of humankind: to forego the delicacies of life, for the bare necessities of it. But these were but light things to him, compar'd with many other troubles he met with.

The ill conduct of the Dutch Traders, who us'd many arts and devices to dissuade the Indians from hearkening to him; the unreasonable jealousies of the Indians, who suspected some evil design against them in almost every thing that was projected for their good—gave him unspeakable trouble and grief; and a vast deal of pains he was at to prevent the evils which those things tended to.

But that which gave him still greater trouble was the frequent and unhappy relapses of some of the Indians to their former vices and ill-customs, after he had conceived hopes of their being truly reformed. Some, of whom his hopes were rais'd, fell again into drunkenness; yea, the Lieutenant himself, who appear'd so zealous against that vice, and seem'd to be firmly fix'd in the ways of religion, conducted himself in a very disorderly manner for a year or two together, being frequently intoxicated, and very troublesome. But he was afterwards recover'd from his apostacy; confess'd his wickedness, was resolv'd to charity, and walked orderly to the day of his death, which was August 10, 1751. When things looked with a favourable aspect, and the Indians appear'd to be seriously engag'd in the ways of piety and virtue, to give him the highest pleasure and satisfaction; but (to use his own Expression) "nothing so affected him with grief and sorrow, his own sins excepted, as the disorderly and wicked behaviour of those to whom he ministered." His concern on that account is not to be expressed: many days he spent in fasting and prayer, and sleep departed from his eyes; his tender heart was almost broken, and he forgot to



eat his bread; and his eyes poured out tears unto God. But tho' he was so tenderly affected and concerned for them, yet this was what he did not much discover to the world. He was also very far from a repining, discontented spirit in the case: was calm, submissive and resign'd to the will of God, not forgetting that expression of his Lord and Master: "Even so, Father, for so it seem'd good in thy sight."

As he, in some measure, had the trials of Moses in bearing the cumber, burden and strife of his people so he was in a good degree possest of the same excellent spirit that was upon him. These are but a specimen of the troubles he met with; many others, too many to be here spoken of, he past thro' during his mission.

If we consider Mr. Sergeant in a relative capacity, he behav'd excellently well in every relation he sustain'd. From a principle of conscience he was very careful to render to all their due, fear to whom fear, honour to whom honour, &c., and his benevolent and truly Christian temper dispos'd him to do good to all as he had opportunity. He was an able, painful, faithful Minister among the people to whom he stood in the relation of a Pastor. He was a most tender, kind and obliging husband to his spouse who well understood how to receive such treatment, and to make answerable returns; and while Divine Providence continued them in that happy and honourable relation, they were a shining example of all that is lovely and beautiful in a married state. He was also a compassionate, affectionate and loving father to his dear children: unwearied in his endeavours to instill into their tender minds a proper sense of their obligations to God, that they might religiously remember their Creator in the days of their youth.

As became a Bishop he rul'd well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity: and like David he walked within his house with a perfect heart.

The last week in June, 1749, he was taken with a nervous

fever, attended with a canker and an inflammation in his throat; brought upon him, as some thought, by excessive care, fatigue and application to business, more than he was able to bear. He calmly, and without any apparent concern, spake of this as his last sickness; and put some things in order, apprehending it to be so. He was able, however, to keep about, and preach'd on the following Sabbath, which was the first in July. In this his last sermon to the Indians, he let them know "that for some time past he had been apprehensive that some heavy judgment hung over them because of their wickedness: that he fear'd that some of them grew worse and worse, notwithstanding all that God had done for them, and notwithstanding the pains he himself had taken with them for their good; and that there were many ways in which God could, and often did, testify his displeasure against a sinful people: and added: "it may be God will take me from you, and then my mouth will be shut and I shall speak to you no more." After this his illness increas'd upon him and soon confin'd him to his house and to his bed. And tho' his sickness was very hard upon him and he endur'd much pain and distress for about twenty days together, in all which time he had but very little sleep, yet his head was free from any disorder and even from pain; and he spake of it to his wife with thankfulness that God had answered his prayers, even to his desire, in continuing to him the free exercise of his rational powers, in favouring him with clear evidences of his good estate, in granting him ability to speak freely to those who were about him, and in enabling him clearly to discern the great and inexpressible satisfaction arising from living devoted to God, and sincerely striving to be faithful to the death.

He carefully improv'd the opportunities he had in counseling and charging those who were about him, and earnestly recommended to them the early choice and diligent pursuit of the ways of wisdom, as being full of pleasure and peace, both in life and death, to those who follow them.

The Indians, who from first to last had a great veneration and hearty affection for him as their father and best friend, were greatly concern'd for, and frequently visited him in, his sickness; upon whom he enforced the instructions, counsels, warnings and admonitions he had given them, in the strongest manner, charging them carefully to follow the ways of Virtue and Religion as they would meet him at last in peace. They were very desirous that his precious life might be spar'd, and of their own accord all assembled at the meeting house, where they earnestly pray'd that God would continue him to be still a blessing to them; and when his death put an end to their hopes, they were very hearty mourners; and numbers discover'd their affection for him by tears whenever they came to the house, for a long time after his death.

He bore with great patience the distress that was upon him, thro' the whole of his sickness, praying and endeavouring that patience might have its perfect work in him.

His spouse, who maintain'd hopes of his recovery till the last day of his life, being then sensible that he drew near his end, enquir'd of him whether he had no earnest desire to live, and whether he saw any gloom on the horrors of the grave—to which he reply'd to this purpose: "If it be the will of God that I should live to do some singular service for him in the world, I could wish to be continued to my family: otherwise I am willing to die. Death is no surprize to me. I bless God I may and can trust Him in whom I have believed and long ago plac'd my everlasting dependance upon. My acquaintance with the blessed world to which I hope I am now hastening, thro' the mercy of God in Christ, is now to commence." At the same time he was full of a humbling sense of his own unworthiness; for when one that stood by observ'd to him that his work was well done, he reply'd "I can call myself a most unprofitable servant, and say God be merciful to me a sinner."

He took his leave of his beloved wife and dear children in an endearing and desirable manner; and after saying a considerable deal by way of counsel and advice, he in a tender manner desir'd his dear spouse patiently and quietly to submit to the parting stroke; to go on with good courage in the way of duty; and added, "It will be but a little while before we shall meet to part no more."

Last of all he devoutly recommended his departing soul to Christ the glorious Redeemer; and after a few faint groans rested from his labours, and his works do follow him.

This solemn, awful and last scene of life Mr. Sergeant, to appearance, past thro' with as much calmness, sedateness and composure of mind, as he ever enjoy'd in his life; and with a serene and pleasant countenance; which (as the last Act) Death changed and sent him away. The weeping spectators of these things beheld them with admiration, and acknowledged they had not before seen the like; and one of them observ'd that it was worth while to die, if it might be in such a manner.

He left behind him a most disconsolate and sorrowful widow, with three small children, the eldest about eight or nine years old, and the youngest upon the breast, on whom the countenance of his father is drawn to the Life. God grant they may all inherit his excellencies and virtues!

Blessed is that servant whom his Lord when he cometh shall find so doing.—*Matthew*, 24:46.

And if he shall come in the second watch or come in the third watch, and find them so, blessed are those servants.—*Luke*, 12:38.

I had tho'ts of continuing this historical account of the affairs of Stockbridge, relating to the Indians, down to the present time; and to have given an account of Mr. Hollis's increasing the boys to be maintain'd and educated at his expense, to the number of thirty-six,—allowing for each boy £5 sterling per annum: of what



the General Assemblies of this Province and of Connecticut have done to encourage the Mohawks to send their children to be educated at Stockbridge, a considerable number of them being already come thither for that end; of what Captain Coram did in England before his death, to promote a female boarding-school at Stockbridge, and what the honourable Society in London have done with respect to it since; of the Rev. Mr. Edwards's<sup>1</sup> succeeding Mr. Sergeant in the ministry, as a missionary to the Indians, &c., &c., &c. But as I have not, so perhaps it is not possible at present to obtain proper and necessary materials for that purpose. I shall not therefore attempt it. But I hope the gentlemen who have the conduct of those affairs and are under advantage for it, will carefully collect and preserve proper materials for it, and that somebody will in time to come give the world a faithful history of the success of those important things which are now carrying on for the good of the poor Natives. For I cannot but hope that the foundation Mr. Sergeant laid will, by the blessing of God, proceed to something very considerable and worthy of a place in future history; and that he to whom the heathen are given for his inheritance, and the utmost parts of the earth for his possession, will say concerning it, *Destroy it not, for a blessing is in it.*<sup>2</sup>

#### THE CONCLUSION IN AN ADDRESS, &c.

I shall now conclude by endeavouring to represent to the people in this country the very great importance of treating the Indians who live among us, and upon our borders, in a just, kind and charitable manner; and that we do, by all proper means and methods, endeavour to attach them to us and to the British interest. This, I apprehend, is a subject that has been too much neglected, and that greatly wants to be set in a clear and just light; and I sincerely wish that some gentleman of greater abilities and address than I can pretend to would take it in hand. Tho', if my weak en-

<sup>1</sup> Jonathan Edwards. He preached to the Indians without notes, but with the aid of an interpreter.

<sup>2</sup> Isaiah 65:8.

deavours may be a means of moving others to do justice to a subject of such weight, I shall heartily rejoice in it. That I may offer what I have to say in the clearest and most concise manner I can, I shall go into the following method:

*First.* I shall endeavour to shew that it is of vast importance to the British Provinces and Colonies in America, especially to the Provinces of the Massachusetts, New York and New Hampshire, that they be on good terms with the Indians, and attach them to their interest. And

*Secondly.* I shall endeavour to show by what means this may be effected, or what are the most likely methods to bring it to pass.

1. I am to show that it is of vast importance that we be on good terms with the Natives, and that we ingage them in our interest. I freely grant that the Indians, simply consider'd, are not of such great consequence to us. We can subsist without them. But yet their trade is a considerable article, worthy the care of any politick people, and, managed as it might and ought to be, would yield us great profit. But if we consider them with relation to Peace or War, as attach'd to us or to our enemies, they are of the last importance to us; for they certainly have the balance of power in their hand, and are able to turn it for or against us, according as they stand affected to us. Canada, inconsiderable as it is, and from which, separate from the Indians, we have little or nothing to fear in time of war; Canada I say, would be more than a match for us in case they join with them against us. He must be a great stranger to, and ignorant of, the circumstances both of the English and Indians, who is not sensible of this. Our circumstances are such that we cannot guard ourselves against the incursions of such enemies in time of war, for our frontiers are of vast extent and border upon the adjacent wilderness, which tho' almost inaccessible to us yet is the very element in which they delight to live. They are at home in it. The people therefore who inhabit our frontiers, while they follow their necessary business are expos'd to be an easy

prey to them; and many of them have been surpriz'd in their fields and houses, and in a most barbarous manner put to death. A small number of Indians, encouraged and supported by the French (which they are ready enough to do) can easily keep us in a constant alarm, put us to an immense charge, destroy many and impoverish more in our expos'd places, and not put themselves at all out of their way; yea, find their account in it: for as they live by hunting, so where game is most plenty they are best off; and where can they find a better supply than among our cattle, sheep, and cornfields? There they live at ease, distress and impoverish us, and the adjacent wilderness is their refuge. By retiring into it they are soon out of our reach, and long experience has taught us how ineffectual the measures we have taken for our safety and defence have prov'd.

Some, I am sensible, will say—"let us not be at any cost and pains to gain the friendship of such a perfidious crew, but let us destroy them all." Quickly said indeed, but not so soon nor so easily effected. Those persons who are for destroying them would doubtless soon do it, were they first bound and delivered up to them. But one question here is, how shall we get them into our power, and another is, whether it would be so humane, generous and Christian-like to take away their lives, were that in our power, as it would be to cultivate friendship with them and to seek their best good? If we should be so sanguine as to endeavour to destroy them, it would doubtless prove a vain attempt, and serve only to drive them to the French, who would be very ready to receive and protect them. If we neglect them and take no measures to engage them in our interest, or to cultivate friendship with them, this will probably render them indifferent to us and dispose them to hearken to the enticing insinuations of Romish emissaries; and our situation must be very unhappy when they become engaged in the French interest.

If it be objected that the French have already gain'd a large number of Indians to their interest, and therefore if we use our

best endeavours to gain others, it will avail nothing, for those who are devoted to the French will nevertheless distress us in time of War—I reply:

It is very true that the French of Canada, thro' their policy and vigilance, have taken the advantage of our neglect and gain'd a large number of the natives to their interest and are gaining more and more every year: and some even from among our own Indians. They spare neither cost nor pains to accomplish their designs of this nature; being sensible enough how advantageous it is to them and how injurious to us; and if they continue to be active, and we negligent, as in times past, is it not too probable that they will in a little time attach to themselves all the Indians in North America? Does it not then concern us to use proper and vigorous endeavours to prevent this apparent mischief by countering-working the French, who are, I suppose, tampering with all the tribes of North America, to engage them in their interest? And should we succeed in our endeavours (as it is highly probable we might if proper steps were taken) so as to engage the *Five Nations* and some other tribes, in hearty friendship with us; and especially if we should bestow such favours upon them as would induce them to settle upon our Frontiers, it would in all probability prevent the evil spoken of in the objection; for the Indians from Canada would not molest us if a number of the Natives, in hearty friendship with us, were placed in our borders. Of this we have had a very plain proof the last war, in the safety of Stockbridge and the adjacent places, from any attempts of the enemy from Canada. Stockbridge is in the very road of, and more expos'd to, the Indians from Canada, than any other place whatever; yet we see that the enemy turn'd off east to Connecticut River and west to the Dutch settlements, where they did much mischief; while Stockbridge, Sheffield, New Marlborough and Number One,<sup>1</sup> tho' more expos'd, were not molested. This, so far as we can discern, was owing to a small number of Indians dwelling at Stockbridge, who are our hearty

<sup>1</sup> Dr. Green of the Mass. Historical Society thinks this place was probably Mason, N. H.



and fast friends; which the Enemy being sensible of cared not to come within their reach, least they should be taken in their own snare. And if we should encourage the settlement of other Indian towns upon our frontiers, where hunting is most handy to them, as Stockbridge has been encouraged, should we give them townships of land suitable for their improvement, build a meeting-house and school-house in each town, and support Ministers and Schoolmasters in them, would not this convince them that we are their true friends and seek their good? Would it not induce them to settle in our borders, especially those of them who are desirous that they themselves and their children should be instructed? Would they not be a guard to us in time of war? And if, after all, we should meet with some trouble from the Indians of Canada, might it not be effectually prevented by playing our Indians upon them, as they do theirs upon us? And would not the charge of all this be a trifle compar'd with that of defending ourselves in time of war? But if we neglect them and take no measures to cultivate friendship with them, and especially if we deal injuriously by them, shall we not put an advantage into the hands of the French (which they will not fail of improving) to engage them in their interest, and to imploy them against us in time of war—which would prove a very great calamity to us, if not our utter ruin. These things consider'd, is it not of very great importance that we be at good terms with the neighbouring natives?

2. I will, in the next place, endeavour to show what are the likely methods to bring this to pass, or what measures we must take with the Indians if we would engage them in hearty friendship with us.

And here, in general, our conduct towards them must be such as shall make them sensible that we are indeed their hearty friends; and such also as shall convince them that it is their interest and advantage to be in friendship with us. Nothing short of this, I ap-

prehend, will attach them to us so as to answer the ends proposed. If we often treat with them, renew the friendship, and bestow upon them large presents, or, as they phrase it "smoke together, brighten the chain, or put the brands together to kindle up the former fire," and yet leave room for them to suppose that this proceeds not from true friendship but rather from fear of them, or from suspicion that they will join with our enemies, &c.—this will never be sufficient to engage them; the utmost we can rationally expect from it is that they will not openly break with us, but keep up a shew of friendship that they may have the benefit of future presents at our hands.

Again, if we should by any means convince them that we are their true friends, and yet not go into such measures with them as should turn to their advantage, they would hardly be engag'd for us. As all other people are govern'd by interest, so are they, and the principal handle we can take hold of to attach them to us by, is their interest; and that would not fail of doing it. If a tribe of Indians can sell their skins to us for twenty shillings, and buy their blankets for ten shillings, they will never go to Canada, where they must sell their skins for *ten* shillings and give *twenty* shillings for a blanket. Convince them that it is much for their interest and advantage to be our friends and allies, and we need not fear but that they will be so. Now in order to convince them that we are truly their friends, and that it is their interest to be ours, we must:

In the first place treat them according to the rules of equity and justice. We must not defraud and oppress them, but be honest and just in our dealings with them.

The Natives with whom we have to do are persons of so much sagacity that they can distinguish between just and injurious treatment as well as other men. They are also as ready to resent, and perhaps more forward to revenge injuries, than any other people under heaven. If therefore we treat them in an unjust manner, we may rationally expect that they will be so far from being our

friends that they will join with our enemies and seek opportunities of revenge.

It is well known that the Indians are generally addicted to drunkenness, and that when they have tasted a little liquor they have a strong thirst for more, and will part with anything they have for a sufficient quantity to make them drunk. And is it not as well known that we have taken the advantage of this their vicious appetite, and for a few quarts of rum have purchas'd valuable effects of them? Have not private persons thus made their gains of them, notwithstanding the good laws that have been in force to prevent it? And is not this the manner of all private traders who go among their several tribes for gain?

In our publick dealings with them at our Truck-houses, where rum has been freely sold them, care has been taken that they should not be cheated, but that they should have the full value of what they had to sell; an Indian therefore who was owner of a pack of Beaver, Deerskins or any other valuable goods, could buy a large quantity of rum, and might get drunk perhaps ten times or more; whereas if he had fallen into private hands he must have contented himself with being drunk but once or twice. Which of these proves most injurious to the Indians in the end, I shall not pretend to determine.

When they are thus intoxicated they fall out among themselves, fight and sometimes kill one another, and some have drunk themselves dead on the spot. An instance of each of these there has been, if I am rightly inform'd, at Fort Dummer, since that has been improv'd as a Truck-house; and whether the guilt of that blood does not lie upon us I leave others to judge.

Now, if we treat the natives in this form, will they, can they, live with us? Will not the law of self-preservation oblige them to leave us and go where they may be better us'd? Some of the

Five Nations plainly speak it out, and say "We cannot live with the English and Dutch; they bring us so much rum that it destroys us: we must go to the French, who will let us have but little strong drink." Thus we alienate the Indians from us, and as it were oblige them to go over to the French, who are often our enemies, and fail not to imploy them against us in time of war. And if we proceed to deal thus injuriously with them what can we expect but that they will leave us, and be a severe scourge to us?

Tho' the Indians are sunk below the dignity of human nature, and their lust after drink exposes them to be cheated out of what little they have, yet this gives us no right to deal unjustly by them. They have a natural right to justice, and may with great propriety challenge it at our hand, seeing we profess to be subject to the law of Christ, which teach[es] us to do that which is altogether just. And we should be so far from taking the advantage of their ignorance, vice and poverty to defraud them of what is their just right, that we should rather be mov'd to pity, and compassionate their deplorable state, and be eyes to the blind, etc.

I am fully persuaded that if we were upright and just in all our transactions with them; if our trade with them were put into the hands of faithful men who would deal justly by them; and if they were supplied with all necessaries for themselves and families at a moderate price, it would not be in the power of all the French in Canada (subtil as they are) to alienate them from us. The French are not upon equal ground with us in this affair, for their northern climate is much more inhospitable and severe than ours is. Their country is not so productive of those fruits, which the Indians very much rely upon, as ours, nor can they afford goods which are proper and necessary for the Indians at so cheap a lay as we can: therefore we can give them those advantages which Canada cannot. We can, without damage to ourselves, make it their interest to adhere to us; and when experience has once taught them that their interest



lies with us, they will want no other inducement to engage them to us; yea, it will not only attach those of them to us, who are not yet gone to Canada, but it will induce those who are to return to their brethren, for the sake of the profit they might reap by it; especially if we give them all the advantage we can consistent with our own.

As unjust and abusive treatment of the Indians tends naturally to alienate them from us and to turn them off to the French, so a series of just and faithful dealing with them would be likely to attach them to us, and to make them our fast friends. This again appears from the temper and conduct of that part of the tribe of the River Indians who live at Stockbridge; for tho' they were for a considerable time extremely jealous that we had some ill design upon them, even in the favours they receiv'd at our hands (a jealousy founded I suppose upon the ill-usage the Natives have too often been the subjects of) yet by the just treatment they for a course of years, have met with from the Government, from Mr. Sergeant, Mr. Woodbridge and others, they are become our hearty friends; willing to live or die with us, whether in peace or war.

It is very true that in order to obtain the end propos'd our trade with the Indians must not be in private hands. It must not be in the power of every private person to treat them as he pleases. We may upon good grounds despair of their being treated with equity and justice, if everyone may gratify his avaricious temper in dealing with them. Our trade therefore must be of a publick nature, and must be committed to the care and management of faithful men; not to such as will seek the service, and make friends to procure the post for them<sup>1</sup> (certain indications of a self-seeker), but men of uprightness and integrity must be sought out—such, and such only must be betrusted with business of such importance. Good instructions must be given them, which must be carefully adher'd to.

<sup>1</sup> "The office should seek the man, and not the man the office." Was Mr. Hopkins the originator of the phrase?

If the Indian trade at Canada were in private hands; if every private person might deal with the Indians at pleasure, we might then hope that those who are gone from us would soon return: for in that case it is supposable enough that they would not meet with much better usage there than they do here; tho' it is scarcely supposable that they would meet with much worse. The French trade with the Indians is wholly in the hand[s] of publick officers (if I am rightly informed), and a private man, if he want a deer-skin, a beaverskin, &c., is not allow'd to purchase of an Indian, but must go to the Publick Stores. Upon the supposition that those officers are faithful, and deal justly by the Indians, it is surely a wise and politick method to engage them in their favour. And so long as every private person in the English government is at liberty to trade with them, when and where he pleases, and to cheat them out of what they have, what can we expect but that they will repair to Canada, where they may be better us'd? Is it not owing to the ill-treatment that they have met with from the English and Dutch that so many of them are gone already? And if no proper measures are taken to prevent their being ill us'd, will not those who are yet behind soon follow their brethren? Yea, if we furnish them with large quantities of rum, make them drunk, and then defraud them of what they have, do we not reduce them to a necessity, either of living low and miserable with us, or of going from us that they may fare better? How low, how dispirited, how miserable and brutish these few are who live within our borders, is too manifest. And whether we, by our ill treating of them have not contributed to their misery, is worthy of a serious enquiry. Yea, would it not be proper for us to enquire whether we have not, by our neglect and abuse of them provoked Heaven to let loose the nations upon us who have been one of the sorest scourges that we were ever chastised with? What multitudes have they in a most cruel manner murdered in our borders? How many of our neighbours have they led into captivity, some of whom have been redeem'd at a very great ex-

pence, and others are become either Pagans or Papists, and continue still in a foreign land? And who can count the cost we have been at to defend ourselves against their incursions?

If the British Government should be dispos'd in time to come, to set up and maintain a publick, honest and just trade with the Five Nations or any other Tribes, thereby to attach them to us, to promote their true interest, with other valuable ends that might thereby be answer'd, this objection perhaps would arise, viz: that such a proceeding will be a very great expence to the public, for our trade cannot be safe unless it be protected by a considerable force. A fort must be built and a garrison of fifty, sixty, or perhaps a hundred men, with their proper officers, must be maintain'd at each place where the trade is set up; therefore the advantage would not countervail the cost. To this I reply:

If such garrisons should be tho't necessary in the places where a trade is set up to be a guard to it; the charge would nothing like equal that of an Indian war, which perhaps it might prevent.

But further, I apprehend that the charge of such garrisons might be spar'd; and that, instead of being necessary they would prove very injurious to the Design; and that it would be a very wrong step to take in that Affair.

All who are in any good measure acquainted with the Indians know that they are extremely jealous lest any Incroachments should be made upon them; and it is not strange it should be so, considering what has past over them. And if a number of armed men were placed among them and forts built for the defence of our Trade, they would be suspicious that something hostile was intended, and we should not be able to remove the suspicion. They would behold us with a jealous eye, and perhaps take measures to frustrate the whole design.

The most effectual way to induce them to trust us, is to trust them; and they will be ready enough to protect our trade if we de-



sire it, and show that we confide in them to do it. And when a little experience has taught them how advantageous such a trade would be to them, they would be ready enough to do it for their own advantage. If therefore we should desire them to admit a trader into one of their own forts, or to build a fort at our charge in some convenient place for such a design and to take care that our trade be safe, this would tend to convince them both of our friendship to, and of our confidence in them; and they would not only be pleas'd with it but also ambitious to show us that we may safely trust them. And were I to be the Truck-Master, I should esteem myself much safer in their protection than in a garrison of a hundred English soldiers; for if such a garrison should be placed among them they themselves would suspect some ill design carrying on against them, and the French would infallibly tell them that tho' we pretended peace and friendship, yet our design in the end is to dispossess them of their country.

If indeed a Truck-Master should prove an unfaithful servant, and enrich himself by defrauding them, he might have occasion for English soldiers to protect him and his stores; but if they found him faithful, friendly and just in his dealings with them, they would be as careful of him as of their own eyes, and venture their own lives for him. What would not the Indians of Stockbridge have done for Mr. Sergeant in his Day, whom they had found to be their true and hearty friend, and what would they not do for Mr. Woodbridge, of whom they have had the like experience? Indians will be as ready as the English, and perhaps much more so, to serve and protect, if there be occasion, those whom they have found to be their faithful and real friends. In a word, I apprehend that if we had in times past treated the natives according to the rules of Equity and Justice, it would have been quite sufficient to have engaged them in our interest and to have kept them in amity and friendship with us. And that even now they might in a little time be attach'd to us by such treatment. But this I confess I despair



of if every private person must be left at his liberty to treat them as he pleases, and to defraud them of all they have: which I take to be the case in New York Government, who lie next the Five Nations and have their trade; tho' in this Province we have good laws in force to restrain private persons from selling them strong drink.

2. We should also exercise that kindness and generosity towards them that shall convince them that it is for their interest to be in friendship with us. We should not, in a case of such importance, content ourselves with being barely<sup>1</sup> just in our treatment of them, but we should also be kind and generous, as a proper expedient to obtain the end propos'd. I am aware I shall here be quick interrupted with this exclamation—"What! kind and generous: We have good authority for being *kind to the unthankful and the evil*; and if that good Being who recommends it to us had not given an example of it in his dealings with us, how deplorable had our state been! This kind temper and behaviour is recommended to us in the Gospel not only because it is the will of our Heavenly Father that we should be kind, but also because the exercise of it answers excellent ends; produces very good and desirable effects, such as love, friendship, peace, &c. And while we make a profession of Christianity, it is pity the practice of it, in so material an article, should be objected against. And is it not very proper that we should exercise kindness and generosity to the poor natives, when there is a strong probability of its being of very happy consequence both to them and us?

A great deal of kindness and generosity has been exercis'd towards the River Indians at Housatunnuk, by this Government, by the honourable Corporation at home, by their honourable and Rev. Commissioners at Boston, by the Rev. Mr. Hollis, by the Rev. Mr. Sergeant, Mr. Woodbridge and others; and the consequence has been very happy as to them; they are brought to the Knowledge of

<sup>1</sup> In the original this is "bearly."

the Gospel and to a Christian profession: and many of them, we hope, to the saving knowledge of God. We also have found the benefit of this kind usage of them; for thereby they are become our hearty friends, are united to us in their affections, and were a means in the hand of Providence of covering our most western frontiers in the last war. And were the like kindness shown by us to other tribes, is there not room to hope that the effects might be alike happy? If townships suitable for Indians to settle in were provided in our frontiers, and it were propos'd to them that if they would come and settle in them, they should not only enjoy the land as their own but also have a Minister supported among them to instruct them in the Christian religion, and also a school-master to teach their children to read and write—would not this induce many of them, especially of the better sort, to come and settle in our borders, and would they not cover our frontiers in case of a war with France?

What has been done for the Indians at Stockbridge has doubtless been much observ'd and approv'd of, by the natives far and near. That there is a school set up at Canada, in imitation of Mr. Sergeant's school at Stockbridge, and a large number of scholars in it, we have heard and receive for truth. That the French, who esteem ignorance to be the mother of devotion, and do not desire to teach the Indians anything more than to say their beads and to cross themselves, have done this out of choice, is not at all likely. They do not desire that their Indians should become a knowing people. But yet, being sensible that the report of Mr. Sergeant's school had spread itself far and wide, and that their Indians were pleas'd with the method the English had taken to furnish the natives with knowledge, they apprehended that unless something like it were done among them, there would be danger of the Indians repairing to us for instruction; and to prevent this and to ingage them to themselves, they set up their school. This I conjecture is the truth of the case; and if so it is manifest that the Indians are inclin'd to seek

after knowledge, and therefore would be dispos'd to hearken to such kind and generous proposals if they were made to them. And who can tell but that this, that or the other tribe would gladly settle such towns if they were invited to it in a proper manner?

3. Another step, and perhaps the most promising one we can take to ingage the Indians in friendship with us, is to send missionaries among their respective tribes, Ministers and School-masters, to instruct them in the principles, and to persuade them to the practice, of Christianity. Tho' they have so long liv'd near us and been conversant with us, yet they remain ignorant of the way of salvation, strangers to the Gospel, and are perishing for lack of knowledge: a case that might well move our pity and compassion towards them and put us upon doing what we can for their relief. And whether our former neglect of things of this nature has not been provoking to Heaven may be worthy of our serious enquiry. The interest the Rev. Mr. Barclay had in the Mohawks while he was with them, the reformation of manners he wrought among them, their willingness to receive instruction, and their engagedness to prosecute learning, are a plain indication that faithful missionaries would be welcome to them. And the Five Nations being nearest us and their friendship of very great consequence, it might be proper to begin with them; and what has been done among them by Mr. Barclay and others might be no small help in the case. If we should send persons well qualified for the business to reside among them, and support them well, there would be no foundation for any jealousy that we have an ill design upon them, and if at any time such jealousies should arise they would soon subside upon the Indians having a little experience of our kindness and friendship to them. The prudent conduct and faithful labours of such Missionaries might, by the blessing of God, serve to remove their barbarity, correct their manners, reform their lives, promote in them vertuous sentiments, and by degrees form them to true religion. This we may hope would be the happy event with respect to many



of them, tho' not to all; and if by much labour and expence it might be brought to pass, should we not find our account in it: for what would be the charge of supporting a few missionaries, compar'd with that of an Indian war? And is there not great probability that such measures would in a few years' time attach them to us in a hearty friendship? And if the Five Nations, who are a terror to and have in great measure the command of, other tribes, were indeed our friends and made so by such obligations laid upon them, would it not be an effectual means of restraining other Indians from giving us trouble in case of a war?

The general objection here I am sensible will be: "There is no likelihood of succeeding, and therefore it is not worth while to make any trial—it would only be to spend labour and money to no good purpose"—to which I reply: How can we draw the conclusion before we have made the experiment? Have we ever made any proper trial, and found ourselves disappointed? And can it be look'd upon [as] just to draw such a conclusion in a case of such importance, unless we had better grounds for it?

It is true Mr. Sergeant made a visit to the Susquehanna Indians; Mr. Brainard also, in his day, did the same without success: but we know that the excuse those Indians made was, that they held their lands of the Five Nations, and therefore could not comply with such a motion till their consent was first obtain'd. And besides, shall we esteem two or three visits made by private persons a sufficient trial in this case? Sufficient indeed it was to show that those good Gentlemen were possest of an excellent spirit, and of a laudable zeal for the good of the poor natives: but yet I apprehend not sufficient to discourage further attempts. If those Gentlemen, who went in a private capacity, had sustain'd a publick character, perhaps they had been more regarded. But however, when we have us'd our best endeavours and they indeed prove unsuccessful, we may be excusable; but can we look upon ourselves so, if we sit



still and use no endeavours for the help of those poor benighted people?

If proper attempts should be made for Christianizing the Five Nations, there would, I am sensible, some notable difficulties lie in the way, but yet perhaps none but what might be surmounted.

One difficulty that would doubtless attend such a laudable undertaking would arise from those who maintain a private trade among them, from which they reap great gain; especially by the article of rum, too much of which they convey to them, and by the influence of which the Indians are easily defrauded.

These traders would be very sensible that if Christianity should prevail among those nations, the hope of their gain would be gone; and seeing by this craft they have their wealth<sup>1</sup> they would use their utmost endeavours to dissuade the Indians from embracing the ways of religion. They in fact did so at Housatunnuk, where the number of Indians was small and their trade not so considerable (as the foregoing history shews). How much more then will they do it if endeavours should be us'd to convert the Mohawks, whose trade is vastly more advantageous. But as the Indians at Housatunnuk, by Mr. Sergeant's help saw thro' the artifice they us'd and were made sensible of the selfish views of the traders, so doubtless the Five Nations may easily be inform'd, and the obstruction soon removed.

Another difficulty will arise from the false insinuations of Romish emissaries, who will not fail to tell them that we are about to teach them a false religion, and if they hearken to us they will all certainly be damn'd. But when those Indians are properly inform'd of the conduct of the French and other Roman Catholics, how they deny the use of the Bible to the common people among themselves, and that they have no design to acquaint the Indians with the Word of God, and on the other hand that our design is not

<sup>1</sup> Acts 19:25.

to impose upon them, but to open the Bible to them, to enable them to read it and to judge for themselves, will not this satisfy them of our honest intentions towards them and of the safety and propriety of their examining things, that they may form a judgment for themselves?

A third, and perhaps much the greatest difficulty that would attend this good design is that those Indians esteem themselves Christians already, and value themselves upon being as good Christians as their neighbours. Mr. Sergeant, in his *Journal* of November 25, 1734, says:

“The Mohawks are generally professors of Christianity, but for want of instruction have but little of it in reality.”

They are so ignorant of the principles of religion that they know not the difference between one who is baptiz'd and calls himself a Christian, and one who lives agreeably to the rules Christ has given us to walk by. They are not sensible of the necessity of being conform'd to those rules of vertue and holiness which Christ has prescrib'd. Romish emissaries have baptiz'd some of them, others (as I have been inform'd) have been baptiz'd by Dutch Ministers; and they esteem it a privilege belonging to them to have their children baptiz'd, whenever they present them, without any regard being had either to the qualifications of the parent or the religious education of the child. When the Rev. Mr. Spencer was among them a few years ago they were much displeased that he declin'd baptizing some children whose parents were notoriously ignorant, vicious and wicked. Some Indians from Canada, who had an English woman to their mother, came a few years past to Westfield to visit their English relations there, and while they stay'd at that place they had a child born, and were much offended with the Rev. Mr. Balantine,<sup>1</sup> who declin'd baptizing of it as they desir'd. Since the Rev. Mr. Edwards has been at Stockbridge, one of the Mohawks residing there had a child born, and was highly affronted because Mr. Edwards

<sup>1</sup> John Ballantine, pastor of the Congregational Church, 1741-1767.

did not baptize it upon his desire. From these instances it is evident that they account their children have right to baptism whenever they desire it. And being baptized they esteem them good Christians, whatever their conversation may be: for they derive their notions of Christianity not from the Bible (to which they are strangers), but from the example of the Dutch and French, with whom they are conversant, and who profess themselves to be Christians.

And so far forth as being baptized in the forementioned manner, and calling themselves Christians will make them so, they are so to be esteem'd. Now these things being so, it may prove a difficult thing to make them sensible that drunkenness and other vicious practices are inconsistent with Christianity; because those Christians who fall under their observation give them an example of vice, and go such lengths therein.

But yet I apprehend this difficulty might also be remov'd, by giving them a just and true account of the nature and extent of the Christian Religion; by informing them what the will of Christ is; how he expects that we should be conform'd to his likeness and to his laws. The Indians are as capable of hearing reasons and giving them their weight, as other men; and it is because they know not what Christianity is that they esteem themselves Christians in their present circumstances. When they are made acquainted with the terms of salvation propos'd in the Gospel, and what they must do to inherit eternal life, when they are well instructed in the doctrines of Christ, they will be sensible that the religion which they now have is little or nothing like that which is taught by the Gospel. When Mr. Edwards refus'd to baptize a Mohawk child born at Stockbridge (which I have before mentioned) and they were very much displeas'd with him on that account, he went to them, gave them the reasons of his conduct and inform'd them as clearly as he was able of the nature and end of baptism. Those Indians receiv'd



the force of his reasons, and appear'd to be satisfy'd and contented, when he had taken pains to inform them; and I doubt not but proper instruction and information would remove the difficulty I have been speaking of.

Tho' Christianizing those Indians may prove a difficult work, yet if our endeavours might, by the Divine blessing, be succeeded, would not the advantage thence arising to them and us more than compensate the pains and expence we should be at? And is there not so much ground to hope for success as should induce us to make the experiment?

I shall now conclude by briefly suggesting a few things not yet mentioned, the serious consideration of which may excite us to use our best endeavours for the conversion of the neighbouring Indians to the Christian faith:

1. And in the first place, should not the consideration of the Divine bounty and goodness bestow'd upon us, excite us to imploy part of that undeserv'd goodness to promote the knowledge of God, our bountiful benefactor, among those who are destitute of it? Thro' the undeserv'd favour and blessing of God we have been prosperous in our secular affairs, succeeded in our husbandry, trade, &c., and are become a wealthy people; and, were we as willing as we are able, might we not spare large sums for the propagation of the Gospel among the heathen? Ought we not then to shew our gratitude to the glorious Author of all our comforts by imploying a part of his bounty to promote the Redeemer's Kingdom? Is it not fit that we should thus *honour the Lord with our substance*? Does it not lie as a reproach upon us who make an high profession, that we expend so little to promote the knowledge of God among the Natives, and so much to ill purposes? Were what we imploy in unnecessary expences, by which pride and luxury are indulged and nourished, imploy'd in the laudable method I am recommending, would it not be sufficient well to support a multitude of mis-



sionaries among the neighbouring tribes? Would it not probably be a means of turning many of them from the power of Satan to God, and would it not be an odour of a sweet smell, a sacrifice acceptable, well-pleasing to God?<sup>1</sup> And seeing God, by his blessings, has enabled us to contribute to such a good design, should we not cheerfully give of our substance for the spiritual benefit of the perishing heathen?

2. Should not the light and grace of the Gospel, which we, thro' Divine goodness enjoy, be a stronger argument still to excite us to endeavour the conversion of the heathen. A few generations back we were in a state of heathenism, as they now are: aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and without God in the world;<sup>2</sup> but thro' Divine goodness the Dayspring from on high has visited us, and we enjoy the light and privilege of the Gospel dispensation. Seeing then God has had compassion on us, and bestow'd upon us those richest blessings, ought we not to have compassion on the neighbouring heathen, and use our best endeavours that they also may be made partakers of the light and blessings of the Gospel?

3. Should we not be mov'd to such charitable endeavours from the consideration of the wretched and forlorn circumstances in which the poor Natives appear before our eyes? We often behold those piteous objects, appearing half naked and almost starv'd; which is the effect of their vicious way of living. We see them also in the depths of ignorance and barbarity, wholly unacquainted with the way of salvation and quite unconcern'd for their eternal good; and yet their powers, both of body and mind, are not inferior to our own. Were they brought to civility and industry they might stand upon equal ground with us, respecting the comforts of life; and were they instructed in Divine things, made acquainted

<sup>1</sup> Phil. 4:18.

<sup>2</sup> Ephes. 2:12.

with the great and important truths of the Gospel, they might stand as fair for the Kingdom of Heaven as we do. Should not our eyes therefore affect our hearts when we behold them in such miserable circumstances, and should we not exert ourselves in all proper ways for their help? Did the wounds of the poor man half dead, who fell among thieves, plead with so much eloquence for human compassion as the unhappy state of the poor Natives does for Christian charity? And if the compassion of a Samaritan was mov'd by the former, how much more should the bowels of a Christian be mov'd by the latter.

4. The noble example of some generous and pious persons at home may well excite us to liberal contributions for the benefit of the poor heathen. Not only publick Societies, but also private persons in Great Britain, have generously and liberally contributed for the benefit of the Natives in this distant part of the world, as the foregoing History shows. Tho' they are at 3,000 miles distance, and never beheld, as we do, those miserable objects, yet from a truly pious and generous spirit they have sent over their liberal contributions, that the heathen, by their means, may be inform'd in the way of life. Verily they shall not lose their reward. A noble example they set before us, most worthy our imitation; and how can we excuse ourselves if we neglect to copy after it? Some indeed may plead their inability, but this is not the case of all. Are there not among us many wealthy merchants and traders? Are there not also many farmers who abound in wealth, upon the lands which were a few years ago the property of the Indians who now stand in need of their charity? Should not such persons be mov'd by the generous examples of others, to help forward the noble design of converting the heathen? Yea, are not the people in general able to do something to help forward so good a design? And will it not lie as a reproach upon us if we, who make a high profession of religion prove void of charity when we are so loudly call'd to the exercise of it, not only by the laudable example of

generous benefactors at home, but also by the perishing circumstances of the neighbouring Indians? I shall only add my hearty wishes that this American Continent, which for ages unknown has been a seat of darkness and full of the habitations of cruelty, may become a scene of light and love; that the Heathen in it, who have been wont to thirst after blood, may hunger and thirst after righteousness; that the wilderness and solitary place may be glad for them, the desert rejoice and blossom as the rose; that the glory of Lebanon may be given unto it, the excellency of Carmel and Sharon; that they may see the glory of the Lord and the Excellency of our God.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Isaiah 35:1-2.

FINIS









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